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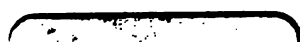
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**THE  
IRISH REBELLION  
OF 1916  
AND ITS MARTYRS:  
*ERIN'S TRAGIC EASTER***

BY

PADRAIC COLUM, MAURICE JOY, JAMES REIDY,  
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AND SEUMAS O'BRIEN

*EDITED BY MAURICE JOY*



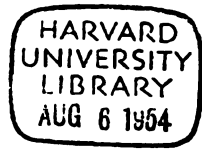
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**Following  
the illustri-  
ous example of the  
Four Masters, this record  
of noble aspiration and action  
is humbly dedicated to the  
"Glory of God and  
the Honor of  
Ireland."**





## FOREWORD

**N**O apology would be needed for writing passionately about the recent Irish Rebellion, and no apology is needed for having written dispassionately about it. The mainsprings of the revolution were rational rather than sentimental, and sacrifice has too long been Ireland's saga to call for any prolonged outburst of rhetoric when her sons prove themselves worthy of her traditions. There is very little "sunburstery" in modern Irish nationalism; it is an aspiration and purpose based on faith and on a critical appreciation of history's lessons and of the spiritual and economic needs of a nation.

Either Ireland is to become an independent nation or she is to remain within the British Empire. Some of those who love her best would prefer to see her a sovereign state; others, not believing that possible, or, perhaps, desirable, think she may well remain loyally within the Empire, if that is the destiny she wishes, but remain in it as a partner and not

## *Foreword*

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as a dependency. The latter conviction does not spring from any love of empire, but from a sense of political actualities. Among the writers of this book some hold one opinion, some the other. The Editor has allowed each writer to express his opinions freely.

The men who took part in the recent rebellion had good reasons for their political philosophy and good reasons for their military acts. But they were not infallible, and they did not claim a monopoly of patriotism. ("Both Eoin MacNeill and we have acted in the best interests of Ireland," says Padraic Pearse, in his last proclamation.) They failed, and present-day Ireland will not grow mawkishly sentimental over that fact. Instead, this very critical generation will realise that national pride is a national asset and that when men believe a country is worth dying for, that country is very likely to justify their faith. There is no whine in Ireland's voice; her appeal is to the conscience and commonsense of humanity, and not to its pity.

To Mr. Joseph McGarrity of Philadelphia, a sincere and generous Irishman, the Editor is beholden for the loan of valuable documents and for some excellent advice. The

## *Foreword*

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photographs in the book are mostly from the Anna Frances Levins studio. That of Roger Casement facing page 296 is by Brown and Dawson.

THE EDITOR.



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## **PART I**

### **THE CAUSES AND HISTORY OF THE REBELLION**



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## SALUTATION

Your dream had left me numb and cold  
But yet my spirit rose in pride,  
Refashioning in burnished gold  
The images of those who died,  
Or were shut in the penal cell—  
Here's to you, Pearse, your dream, not mine,  
But yet the thought—for this you fell—  
Turns all life's water into wine.

I listened to much talk from you,  
Thomas MacDonagh, and it seemed  
The words were idle, but they grew  
To nobleness, by death redeemed.  
Life cannot utter things more great  
Than life can meet with sacrifice,  
High words were equalled by high fate,  
You paid the price, you paid the price.

The hope lives on, age after age,  
Earth with its beauty might be won  
For labor as a heritage—  
For this has Ireland lost a son,  
This hope into a flame to fan  
Men have put life by with a smile.  
Here's to you, Connolly, my man,  
Who cast the last torch on the pile.

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ed in

### *Salutation*

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Here's to the women of our blood  
Stood by them in the fiery hour,  
Rapt, lest some weakness in their mood  
Rob manhood of a single power—  
You, brave as such a hope forlorn,  
Who smiled through crack of shot and shell,  
Though the world look on you with scorn,  
Here's to you, Constance, in your cell.

Here's to you, men I never met,  
But hope to meet behind the veil,  
Thronged on some starry parapet  
That looks down upon Inisfail,  
And see the confluence of dreams  
That clashed together in our night,  
One river born of many streams  
Roll in one blaze of blinding light!

GEORGE W. RUSSELL (Æ.)

## CHAPTER I

### POLITICAL ALIGNMENT IN IRELAND

**A**T first sight Irish politics seem hopelessly incomprehensible to any one but an Irishman, but that is merely because people persist in thinking that their main issue can be summed up as "for or against England." That issue may be found in the hearts of the people, but not on their political platforms to-day, except in the case of that brilliant and sincere minority who crowned their lives by their recent insurgence. There is no party "for England" in Ireland. There is a party for Ulster which has happened in the past to be identified with the English cause, but which showed recently that its loyalty to England would cease on the day when England passed legislation peculiarly obnoxious to it.

Politically, Irishmen are divided into Unionists, Home Rulers and Separatists. The Unionists believe that the status established in

### *The Irish Rebellion*

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1800 when the Irish and British Parliaments were amalgamated by the Act of Union, should be maintained. The Home Rulers believe that Ireland should have a parliament of her own similar to those of Canada and Australia; they want to become citizens of the British Empire on terms acceptable to a self-respecting nation which is willing to recognise that her complete independence is impossible, even if it were preferable to a partnership in a far-flung empire. The Separatists believe in an independent Ireland for the reasons that King Albert believes in an independent Belgium or George Washington believed in an independent America. No nation, not even Ireland, can have a majority of heroic idealists, and, as a consequence, the Separatists are fewer in number than the Home Rulers. Unionists correspond to the Tories who opposed George Washington, Home Rulers think Ireland should be as independent of Westminster as Texas is of Washington, Separatists want to be as clear of the Empire as Cuba is of the United States. The Unionists are mainly Protestant, the Home Rulers and Separatists are mainly Catholic. Thus there are about one-fourth of the people of Ireland

### *Political Alignment in Ireland*

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in favor of the Act of Union and three-fourths against it.

The Separatist ideal has given Ireland her most popular heroes, but, without question, the last quarter of the nineteenth century had seen its influence steadily decrease. The passing of the Local Government Act of 1898, the work of the Congested Districts Board, designed to alleviate the hard lot of the western peasants, and remedial land legislation had begotten a feeling that "the English aren't such bad fellows after all." Curiously enough, most of this legislation was passed by Conservative governments at Westminster; while it was a sincere attempt to do something statesmanlike for Ireland, it was accompanied by the hope of "killing Home Rule with kindness." It did not kill Home Rule, but it did lessen anti-English feeling. Later on the old fierce antagonism was further softened by the passing of an act which appeased, if it did not altogether satisfy, the popular claim for university education. The country seemed inclined to settle down to enjoy what it had so hardly won, and something of the fire went out of the whole Nationalist movement so far



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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as the older generation of Irishmen was concerned. It was sick of struggle.

But meanwhile a young generation was growing up. It was better educated, and had a sounder grasp of economic reality than the old. It was impatient of makeshift legislation and equally impatient of the theory that identified a nation's whole destiny with an act of Parliament. Considering that a Royal Commission appointed by the British Parliament had found in 1896 that Ireland was being overtaxed to the extent of \$15,000,000 a year—and that Parliament had done nothing to lessen the burden—it saw no reason to be grateful for legislation which was by way of a restitution of stolen goods, an inadequate restitution made, not because it was good for Ireland, they said, but because it was politic for England. History, it must be confessed, bore out this contention. "Sir," said Samuel Johnson to an Irishman of his day, "do not unite with us—we will rob you." And it was the same gruff and honest scholar who gave Ireland the advice—"You will get nothing from an Englishman by rubbing him down—rub him up, sir, rub him up."

This young generation was also proudly

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### *Political Alignment in Ireland*

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idealistic. It revived the cry of "Ireland a Nation," and, having no hope then of an appeal to arms, set before the people a programme of Spartan discipline. This was the original Sinn Fein programme which Mr. Colum deals with further on in this book.

Sinn Fein has always been a spirit rather than a party, and has attracted all those Nationalists who have been disgruntled by the work of Mr. Redmond and the Parliamentary Party. Its supporters have often gone too far in their denial of the good work Mr. Redmond and the Party have done, but without a doubt that Party was, and is, in need of healthful criticism. Under the influence of life in the House of Commons, with their families settled in London, many of its members lose all their finer sense of Irish nationality; they tend to adopt the manners and ideology of the English lower middle classes, the most unlovely aspects of Britain. Such men continue to give their public life devotedly to Ireland long after their Catholicism has become the one bond between Ireland and their private lives. The spectacle of them, fine and daring apostles of robust nationalism in their youth, thus deteriorating, has accounted to the

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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youthful Sinn Feiner for their lack of emphasis in pushing any national movement, such as the Gaelic Language or the Agricultural Co-operative movements, but that upon which their return to Parliament rested. The truth is that the Sinn Feiner has asked them to be statesmen where they have conceived that it was their duty to remain agitators; and no man can be an agitator twenty-four hours of the day. The Parliamentary Party has been the means of procuring an amount of remedial legislation for Ireland; and however bitterly its sharp tongue may resent the ideals of a younger generation superseding its own, the younger generation can afford generously to withhold criticism of a party which has done much spade work for nation-building. In so far as it has helped to clear some obstacles from Ireland's path towards economic prosperity, it has helped her towards freedom; and in so far as Ireland's soul is vital she should be able to overcome the handicap of its venial sins.

It has been too easily supposed that a Unionist is always an anti-Irish Irishman. Some Unionists are very enthusiastic Irishmen and give generously of their brains, money and

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### *Political Alignment in Ireland*

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time towards the economic upbuilding of the country. Nor are all Separatists bitterly anti-English; very many of them have English affiliations and, were Ireland an independent state, would welcome an Irish-English entente. It is a very great mistake to suppose that an independent Ireland would be an anti-English Ireland. You cannot discuss friendship with a man while he has your feet in chains even if he assures you that your wife and children are thriving on the crops he has raised on your farm. This is the simple truth which so many Englishmen have failed to comprehend because they have never known the nature of chains. For generations Englishmen did not see why Irishmen should either thrive or think; then, having decided that they were entitled to do both, they failed to understand that prosperity or freedom of speech or opinion is of little value except in as far as it adds to the sum of human liberty.

There are plenty of Separatists who read the history of Ireland almost as casually as they do the history of any other country; their interest is in the facts and forces of to-day, and they are convinced that Ireland will not accomplish her destiny, whatever it is, until she

### *The Irish Rebellion*

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has realised her own assets, and purged herself of her liabilities, in freedom. The faults of the Irish race throughout the world are precisely those faults of the individual which can most readily be eradicated by increasing his responsibilities. The methods of England, since they ceased to be those of a tyrant, have been those of an incompetent parent who trains her children alternately on rods and lollipops without any consideration beyond the immediate effect achieved. This tragic incompetence is quite sufficient to justify the Irish claim for self-government without making any appeal to sentiment.

It has sometimes been pointed out that the opposition to Irish autonomy comes from the most prosperous part of Ireland. That is so; the North-east of Ireland is the most prosperous part and it contains the most Unionists. But the reason of its prosperity, in addition to the undoubted ability of its people, is that during the critical infant years of its economic struggle it was helped by the British Government where the rest of Ireland was hindered. Its inhabitants had been taught to regard themselves as the owners of the island; belonging to the Protestant religion they had no tra-

### *Political Alignment in Ireland*

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dition of persecution to overcome. They had the priceless asset of self-confidence. The Catholic Irish were a *gens lucifuga*. Tenants almost to a man until late in the nineteenth century, their only security in the economic world was the good-will of their Protestant landlord,<sup>1</sup> and what that good-will was worth to them is best shown by the remedial agrarian legislation the British Parliament found it desirable to pass as soon as the Catholic Emancipation Act and subsequent acts enabled the Irish democracy to find their political feet. If you want to understand why the southern Irish of a few generations ago did not prosper, lease a quicksand and give your time and energy to building a castle on it, sure that if by chance you find a spot of it where stone can stand upon stone, the lessor will come and charge you rent for the edifice. How could men achieve prosperity who were not sure of their holdings from year to year? And yet God knows they worked hard enough, as any one may know who will climb mountains twelve to twenty-four hundred feet in height in the West of Ireland and come on the traces

<sup>1</sup> The few Catholic landlords like Lord Kenmare, in the 'eighties, were not particularly famous for leniency.

### *The Irish Rebellion*

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of a laborious and pathetic cultivation. A nation's heart and spirit are not part of its currency, but they are part of its economic assets.

England, by reason of her mineral resources, is a country predominantly industrial, and therefore well benefited by Free Trade. Ireland is a country predominantly agricultural and therefore one in need of Protection. But as long as the trade laws of Ireland are made by a parliament at Westminster those laws will be made in the interests of England, and Ireland will have to suffer even as the agricultural districts of England suffer. But England, for the sake of overwhelming industrial prosperity, can afford the agricultural depression of a minority. Ireland, for the sake of a small industrial minority, cannot afford the poverty of her agricultural majority. I do not say that even while trade relations remain as they are Ireland's economic condition cannot be improved. I know, now that land tenure is becoming satisfactory, better methods of cultivation will obtain better results. But if Ireland were free, as Canada and Australia are free, to tax imports from England, her struggling industries would soon have a different tale to tell without impairing her agri-

### *Political Alignment in Ireland*

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cultural progress. Asking Ireland to become thoroughly prosperous while subject to the same trade laws as England is like asking a man to fight with one arm in a sling.

English rule in Ireland might have overcome the handicap of being English and alien, but it could not overcome the handicap of being English and bad. While England was building an empire across the seven seas she was building a hell in Ireland. And when suddenly she found the proximity of hell uncomfortable, she found no better remedy than to persuade herself that it was really heaven. Exeunt English cruelty and tyranny and enter English benign and complacent stupidity. In the new dispensation, the paternal, which ushered in a number of minor alleviating acts of Parliament, and one or two major ones, the Irish, to the British Liberal mind, became a race of saints whose wings had become somewhat mutilated by vain flapping, but who would be perfectly content to remain on their spiritual pedestals as soon as their futile wings were repaired—with plaster! Result—unstatesmanlike and insufficient land acts, unstatesmanlike and insufficient education acts,



## *The Irish Rebellion*

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unstatesmanlike and deplorable<sup>1</sup> "congested districts" acts, and now an unstatesmanlike and insufficient measure of "Home Rule."<sup>2</sup> What an Irishman wants has nothing to do with saintship; it is the right to be an intelligent and healthy human being in an intelligently governed land. He does not want the semblance of freedom, of which plaster wings are the symbol, but the actuality of freedom of which the symbols are good crops, crowded harbors and a civic life which will not allow Brummagen smoke clouds to shut out the light of the stars.

To any man of spirit, alien political domination is offensive. I do not call the Unionists of Ireland lacking in spirit, for the reason that English domination is really not alien to them. What is alien to them is the Catholic Church, and it is their hatred of that Church rather than anything else which makes them stand apart from the majority of Irishmen.

<sup>1</sup> Deplorable in so far as they tended to increase reliance on state aid and reduce self-reliance.

<sup>2</sup> When I wrote this I was thinking of the compromise Mr. Lloyd George was supposed to have effected between Mr. Redmond and Sir Edward Carson. It has since happily fallen through. See page 48.



### *Political Alignment in Ireland*

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Roman Catholicism is their bugbear—Protestant mothers keep their children from the marshes near the Lagan by telling them that “down there the young popes will get you.” It is a fear medieval in its origin, medieval in its intensity, and more than medieval in its indifference to the lessons of the history of human freedom. It is founded, of course, on the undoubted power of the priests in the rural districts of Ireland, but that power is the direct result of a governmental system which made the priest the only intelligent friend the people had.

It is not the peculiar characteristic of Catholic priests to cling to political power, as any one who knows the activities of the Church of England parson and the North of Ireland minister, can attest. Ecclesiastics always cling to political power until it is taken from them, and you cannot take it from them as long as they remain the ablest exponents of a just cause. There is no reason to expect that the decline of the priests’ political power in Ireland will be accompanied with the bitterness experienced elsewhere in Europe, but with the growth of freedom and education, which always disintegrate old social establishments,

### *The Irish Rebellion*

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the decline must come. When it does come Irishmen will have a splendid opportunity of showing, what was forgotten in France and elsewhere, that the parish pump is not the source of eternal life and that they need not lose their grasp of eternal truth merely because a priest has lost his temper or obtained control of a school. It will be very much more difficult for a priest to keep political power in a community predominantly Catholic which has to manage its own affairs, with all the differences of opinion incidental thereto, than to keep his political power in a community predominantly Catholic which is endeavoring to wring elementary justice from a Protestant power.

The Protestant and the Catholic do not understand the same thing by religious intolerance. When a party of Protestant preachers was hunted from the Catholic cities of Cork and Limerick, the Catholics were accused of intolerance! When the Catholics were refused permission for a procession with the Host to pass through the streets of a Protestant city, the Protestants were accused of intolerance! Let the outsider say what he thinks. The simple truth about Ireland is that the naturally

### *Political Alignment in Ireland*

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tolerant and kindly character of the Irishman allows him to give those differing from him in religion the benefit of every doubt, except in those districts where the population is evenly divided and the memory of ancient wrongs persisting makes the personalities of Black Bess and Bloody Mary far more vivid than anything that has happened since these two were happily gathered to their disreputable forbears. One other bitterness they cherish, the bitterness of the Boyne, both Orangeman and Catholic alike ignorant that Ireland was then but a pawn in the struggle between the Vatican and the Grand Monarch, and that the news of the victory of the "glorious, pious and immortal" Protestant monarch, William of Orange, was hailed with delight at the Vatican!

Politics in most countries only interest the average man when something begins to go wrong with the State; but since it is chronic to have something, and a great deal, wrong with the State in Ireland, the average man there pays far more attention to politics than elsewhere. As a result a great deal of national effort, which might have been put to immediate profitable use, has been expended on the

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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fight for national government which, it is hoped, will prove worth the sacrifices made for it. But many Irishmen in recent years have very wisely seen that the mere passing of an act of parliament will not remedy the wreck of centuries, and that, without prejudice to the cause of autonomy, much might be done to strengthen both the character and the resources of the people. The ending of British rule would not at once end Irish ruin. Habits of responsibility and public spirit must be developed towards the wider exercise of them in days to come. Many Unionists have helped to foster this point of view, taking the somewhat fatalistic stand, that if Home Rule would come it would come, and that the better the material which exercised it the less would be the evil. Of these the foremost is Sir Horace Plunkett, whose devotion to Ireland has been equalled by its misunderstanding of his efforts at first and its fine tribute subsequently, the only tribute he cares for, in the practical carrying out of his teaching. He founded the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, whose purpose was and is to educate the Irish farmer in those methods of agricultural co-operation which have made Denmark

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### *Political Alignment in Ireland*

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a by-word for agricultural progress. The Society has organised nearly one thousand associations of farmers, including credit societies, seed and manure purchasing societies, creameries, etc. These various associations have a combined membership of nearly one million persons. Their accomplishment is not merely to obtain better supplies for the farmer at cheaper prices, to give him credit at a reasonable rate for a reasonable time, but also to familiarize him with better business methods and to teach him that in helping his neighbor he can also help himself and build up a rural life which will save his children from the lure of the town. This formula of "better business, better farming, better living," which was invented by Sir Horace Plunkett and afterwards used to great effect by Mr. Roosevelt in the United States, expresses the ideals of the I. A. O. S.

In the ranks of these farmers' societies, it is quite customary to find Catholic and Protestant uniting and working with the greatest enthusiasm for the common end. Thus the co-operative movement has been one of the most potent forces in breaking down old antagonisms, notwithstanding that it has had to face

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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an unique combination of enemies. When the historian of the future comes to write of the Irish resurgence, it is doubtful if he will find that any Irishman of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries rendered a greater service to Ireland than did Sir Horace Plunkett. Certainly he will not find that any man gave Ireland more unselfish devotion and courageous loyalty.

The Gaelic League is another organisation which, in its very different way, has enabled the various factions in Irish life to understand each other. Non-political as politics are understood in Ireland, its object is to restore the Gaelic language and literature to the people and to de-Anglicise the country. It is endeavoring to bring back all that is distinctive and worth while in Irish tradition, and, in doing so, it has inculcated lessons of self-reliance, self-respect, self-discipline, and self-confidence which have already had their effect for good on the younger generations. Whatever may be said of the League's practicality, it is a magnificent spiritual adventure, and spiritual adventures add to the value of nations as they do to the value of individuals.

It may be well in closing this introduction

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### *Political Alignment in Ireland*

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to deal for a moment with a criticism often levelled against Irishmen, namely that they can never agree among themselves. I do not think Irishmen disagree any more than do the men of any other nation who like to do their own thinking, but I think Irishmen are too often lacking in social discipline. Heaven knows that morally they discipline themselves thoroughly. Why, then, in the ordinary affairs of life do they seem to be so often at loggerheads? I think it is because law and order have never been in Ireland, as they have been elsewhere, the handmaidens of a fuller and more secure life. They have been the instruments of repression and punishment. As a result the Irishman has held them in contempt, and this contempt has penetrated into social life. Irish history has served to develop the intense individuality of men always at hand-grips with death, political death, moral death (the various proselytising campaigns) and economic death. But, no doubt, Irishmen will never become quite so obedient as Englishmen; neither for that matter will Frenchmen. But French civilisation has examples of other fine qualities to give the world, and so has Irish. And, after all, no nation can be



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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altogether perfect. The charm, the wit, the spirituality, the hospitality, the courage of the Irish have done much to add to the sum of worth-while life in this planet of ours and have done it in spite of history.

MAURICE JOY.

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## CHAPTER II

### CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION AND AGRARIAN REFORM

**T**HE movement to create a democracy in Ireland—a government of the people, for the people, by the people—was begun in 1828, when an Irish Catholic put himself forward as candidate for election in an Irish constituency. The event was considered as sensational as an insurrection and the peasants who voted for the popular candidate suffered severe reprisals. The candidate was Daniel O'Connell and the election was the historic Clare election. A year afterwards, in 1829, the Catholics of Ireland—that meant the bulk of the Irish nation—were “emancipated.” From that date until his death O'Connell strove to win for his people legislative independence—the sort of autonomy that every state in the American Union possesses.

About forty years before, political and intel-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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lectual leaders had struggled to conserve and extend the powers of an Irish Parliament which was then in existence. But at that time the mass of the Irish people—the Catholic and Celtic peasantry—were inert politically. O'Connell himself was a sign that an Irish democracy had now come into being. What he demanded in the name of this democracy was the abrogation of the union of the legislatures of Great Britain and Ireland.

"The Union" meant the merging of two distinct legislatures. Before it was merged in 1800 the Parliament of Ireland, although elected on the most restricted franchise and without a cabinet responsible to it, had powers that were useful for the development of the country. This Parliament had been made almost independent in 1783 when the Legislature of Great Britain renounced its power of binding it. The "Renunciation Act" is memorable: by declaring that the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland were alone competent to make laws for that kingdom, it created the "Constitution of 1783," the restoration of which was sought in our day by the original Sinn Fein group.

The Union was passed in 1800 and the Irish

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### ***Catholic Emancipation and Agrarian Reform***

Parliament went out of existence. O'Connell, in the second stage of his career, made a gigantic effort to carry its repeal. However, after 1829 the Constitution created by the Renunciation Act would have meant something different from what it had meant in 1783. In 1783 an Irish Parliament was a Colonial and Protestant one; in 1829 an Irish Parliament would have been a national one with Celtic and Catholic elements predominating.

O'Connell failed to win repeal, and, at the height of his agitation, the dreadful famine of 1846-47 occurred. Subsequently almost half the Irish population was lost—they perished from famine or famine diseases or they fled from the country. "The Liberator," now an old man, died in despair. In the next decade an attempt was made to create an organization for the tenant-farmers of Ireland. That attempt failed and the tenant-farmers were left in circumstances that were really appalling.

The next generation in Ireland made ready to fight for a Republic. After the American Civil War Irish officers and soldiers organized themselves as a great auxiliary to a Republican movement in Ireland. Those in that movement were popularly known as "Fen-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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ians," but officially they were "The Irish Republican Brotherhood." The Fenian threat won many concessions for Ireland, but, as a momentous force, Fenianism was practically shattered after 1867. Centres of the Irish Republican Brotherhood have continued to exist in Ireland and in America, but Fenianism was now important in Irish Nationalism as an auxiliary or a secret weapon.

In 1870 the term "Home Rule" was used for the first time. A group of business and professional men in Dublin formed an association intended to create a public opinion in favor of a minor measure of self-government for Ireland. The measure they advocated came to be termed "Home Rule" and the domestic title fitted very neatly its homely demands. What the advocates of Home Rule asked for was something less than Repeal of the Union. Maintain the Union, if you will, they said, but delegate certain powers to an executive assembly in Ireland, and let the Parliament of Great Britain keep an overriding authority. The powers that such an Irish legislature might possess were not detailed but were left for a process of bargaining. It should be noted that these have tended to shrink. The



**CHARLES STEWART PARNELL**  
(During his last illness)

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### ***Catholic Emancipation and Agrarian Reform***

powers offered in Gladstone's Home Rule Bills were more numerous and more far-reaching than those detailed in the measure that is now on the British Statute Book. One important item, however, has been retained: the responsibility of the Irish Executive to a freely elected Irish Parliament.

When the Home Rule Association was formed in 1870 the men who were to make the movement a national reality were not yet on the horizon. Charles Stewart Parnell was living as a country squire, and Michael Davitt, son of an evicted tenant-farmer, was in the hands of the police and was about to be sentenced to a convict's term in a horrible English prison.

"Our eviction," Michael Davitt wrote, "and the privations of the preceding famine years, the story of the starving peasantry of Mayo, of the deaths from hunger, and the coffinless graves on the roadside—everywhere a hole could be dug for the slaves who died because of 'God's Providence'—all this was the political food, seasoned with a mother's tears over unmerited sorrows and sufferings, which had fed my mind in another land, a teaching which



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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lost none of its force or directness by being imparted in the Gaelic tongue."

It has been said already that the circumstances of the Irish tenant-farmers were appalling. They were tenants at will—that is, at landlord's will: they had no claim to ownership in the land they labored on. If they failed to pay a rent arbitrarily fixed, or if they offended a landlord in word or deed, they were turned out of the houses they had built and off the lands they had labored on. Outside certain Ulster Counties where there was some little security of tenure, there could be no progress for the farmer. If he improved his land or made his house more habitable, if he showed a better appearance at church or market, the rent was raised on his estimated earnings. After the famine an attempt was made by Charles Gavan Duffy to give the tenant-farmers an organization, but the attempt did not succeed.

The family of Michael Davitt emigrated to Scotland, and Michael, as a child, began to work in a factory. He had an arm torn off by a machine. He educated himself as he grew up, and, in his early manhood, while living away from Ireland, became a member of the

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### *Catholic Emancipation and Agrarian Reform*

Irish Republican Brotherhood. He was engaged in smuggling arms into Ireland, was tried for treason-felony, and, in July, 1870, was sentenced to fifteen years solitary confinement with hard labor. The treatment accorded to this political prisoner was foul and horrible.

At the end of 1877 Davitt was released. He came out of prison with a great idea in his mind—the idea of destroying Irish landlordism, root and branch. It was during his tour in America when he had the backing of that splendid Irishman who is still with us, John Devoy—"The most daring and resolute of all the Fenian leaders," as Davitt called him—that he announced his programme.

A demand for the immediate improvement of the Irish land system by such a thorough change as would prevent the peasantry from being further victimised by landlordism. . . . This change to lead up to a system of small proprietorship similar to what at present obtains in France, Belgium and Prussia. Such land to be purchased or held directly from the State. The State to buy out the landlord and to fix the cultivators on the soil.

He made it clear to the Fenians in America that their militant and republican ideals would

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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not be really popular in Ireland until they showed ability to protect the serf—as the tenant-farmer in Ireland might then be called. “If the Nationalists want the Irish farmer to believe in, and labour a little for, independence,” he said in Boston, “they must first show themselves desirous and strong enough to stand between him and the power which a single Englishman wields over him.” His propaganda convinced the Fenians in America and Davitt with Mr. Devoy returned to Ireland to lay their proposals before the Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The Fenian Council did not approve of the proposals, and Davitt went alone to investigate conditions amongst the peasants in the West of Ireland.

In 1879 all thoughtful people were in a condition of anxiety as to the prospect of the farmers in the coming season. Two bad harvests had reduced them to the lowest straits, there was every prospect of a third which would ruin their credit with the storekeepers. The landlords were pressing them as remorselessly as ever. Davitt went to that reserve of Irish revolutionary force—the remains of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. “Everywhere he

### **Catholic Emancipation and Agrarian Reform**

went," Francis Sheehy-Skeffington wrote in his *Life of Michael Davitt*, "he sought out the local Fenians and tried to induce them to co-operate in his plans; in most cases he was successful in obtaining their promise of assistance. In the sequel the Fenians proved to be the backbone of the movement."

Nine years after the Home Rule Association was formed the engine was put upon the rails that was to carry Home Rule over miles of rough and hostile terrain. That engine was the Land League which Michael Davitt formed in April, 1879. There was one thing which the people of Ireland desired with all their passion and instinct—that was the destruction of alien landlordism. Davitt's organization was a simple and powerful means to that end. Before the League was formed, when a landlord turned a family out on the wayside he could always get another family to take the land at the same or at a higher rent. But suppose the people bound themselves not to take the farm of an evicted family? The holding then would be left on the landlord's hands, earning nothing for him. Such a condition would give the tenants their first chance of bargaining with the landlords.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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This meant conflict with the authorities who were the landlords in official and administrative positions. But now all the forces in the country were behind the Land League—the constitutional tenant-right associations, the Fenian groups, the secret agrarian societies that had existed for private vengeance. A political party was brought into existence to force legislative acts through, and to fight the punitive measures of a parliament still predominantly feudal. The franchise had been extended and the Irish tenants were able to elect members who actually represented them. Elections fought on the absorbing land issue gave the parliamentary party the unity of an army. A strong man came to the head of it in the person of Charles Stewart Parnell. To drive towards self-government with the force of agrarian passion was the design of the Irish parliamentary leaders. Two Home Rule Bills were introduced by Gladstone: the first, in 1886, was defeated by a narrow majority in the House of Commons; the second passed through the Commons, but was destroyed by the veto of the House of Lords in 1893.

Meanwhile land reforms had been won. In 1881 came the Irish tenants' charter of free-



JOHN E. REDMOND



MICHAEL DAVITT

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### *Catholic Emancipation and Agrarian Reform*

dom—an act that guaranteed him the ownership of the improvements he made on his farm with security in his holding while he paid his rent. Land courts were established to fix fair rents for farms. A limited scheme of land purchase was also put into operation.

Reaction came with the defeat of the second Home Rule Bill: Parnell was dead; there was a split in the parliamentary party, and Irish self-government ceased to be a living issue in the British House of Commons.<sup>1</sup>

But the drive towards the re-conquest of the land still continued. At last in 1903 a conservative government introduced a land purchase scheme. What they did was to put an enormous credit at the disposal of Irish landlords and tenants. Landlord and tenant agree on terms of transfer. The tenant buys at eighteen, nineteen, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two or twenty-three years' purchase. The landlord is paid in cash or land-stock. The tenant then goes on paying into a government department a decreased rental for about sixty-nine years. The process of transfer is still going on. And

<sup>1</sup> For an intimate and fascinating account of this tragic period see Katharine Tynan's *Twenty Five Years' Reminiscences*.



### *The Irish Rebellion*

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most of the land of Ireland has now passed to the tenants on such terms.

Meanwhile, in 1898, a system of local government was set up in Ireland through popularly elected County and District Councils. The Congested Districts Board was created to assist the people in the most impoverished districts of the West and South. In 1900 the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction was instituted to foster agriculture and industries, and to organise technical training. Then, in 1909 a National University was established in Dublin.

PADRAIC COLUM.

## CHAPTER III

### SINN FEIN AND IRISH IRELAND

**I**N 1903, while Ireland was triumphant over the passing of the Land Purchase Act, a movement that had no legislative programme was at its height. It was largely labelled "The Irish-Ireland Movement," and it was for the reconstruction of Irish life—"nation-building" and "nation-maker" were the words constantly used. The Irish nation was being rebuilt, people imagined, and it was resolved that it should be built from Irish materials and according to Irish design. The note of the period was youth, eagerness and a belief in a renaissance. The whole movement had for its centre the revival of the Gaelic language.

That revival had been begun ten years before with an address by Dr. Douglas Hyde, "The Necessity for de-Anglicising Ireland." It was pointed out in that address that while

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the people were waiting for some form of self-government, everything vital and distinctive in Ireland's intellectual and spiritual life was being destroyed or corrupted. The language which was the most certain mark of a distinctive civilization was disappearing, and the English language with its content of alien and de-nationalizing thought was filling the whole of Ireland. "You cannot make a nation of half-and-halves," said the pioneers of the movement, "you can only have a province where people are half Irish and half English. Make them wholly Irish—in speech, in thought, in mental direction, and then you will make a nation that will have a worthy civilization." The programme was enthusiastically adopted, and in 1903 the movement carried on by young men and women in eager comradeship was at its height.

The sequents to the first idea were quickly realized. If one strove to be Irish in speech one should also strive to wear clothes of Irish manufacture. If one aimed at conserving the Irish language one should also aim at conserving Irish games and dances. A real movement for the development of a national culture began. Irish industries of all kinds got a

### *Sinn Fein and Irish Ireland*

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splendid advertisement and considerable protection. And, on the intellectual plane the movement signalized itself by a creative effort that roused interest in Europe and America.

There was a new outburst of Irish literature in the English language. It happened that Ireland at the moment had two remarkable literary men, W. B. Yeats and George Russell (Æ.). These two poets had been doing fine and subtile work, but in a previous day the fineness and the subtilty of it would prevent its having influence. But now with a hopeful revival, with an actual reconstruction through land reform of rural life half a dozen young writers had been given material and inspiration. They looked to these two poets, and by them they were helped to real discoveries and appropriate forms. W. B. Yeats and George Russell, with a third eminent writer, Standish O'Grady, were themselves caught into the movement and their work became the most remarkable product of the revival on its literary side.

Two weekly journals had been founded to advance the doctrine of "Irish Ireland"—*The United Irishman*, edited by Arthur Griffith, and *The Leader*, edited by David

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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Moran. They belonged to different wings of the movement but they were at one in preaching de-Anglicisation and at one also in advising disregard for the Parliamentary agitation of the Nationalist party. *The United Irishman* opened its columns to the poets and dramatists produced by the revival, and the new poetry had its first publication in this political journal.

The Parliamentary Party in the British House of Commons had been reunited under Mr. John Redmond. However, a Conservative party was in power at Westminster and the parliamentarians could effect nothing. It seemed that the parliamentary agitation which had been so important during the Home Rule and the agrarian movements would come to be overlooked. Things other than what they could deal with had begun to bulk big—the revival of language and industries. And besides the whole ideology of the new movement was opposed to a parliamentary agitation abroad—"Irish Ireland" was the watchword, and what had Irish Ireland to do with what was said and done in the British House of Commons? Yet certain legislative measures were necessary. How could they be

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### *Sinn Fein and Irish Ireland*

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obtained without impairing the sanction of the Irish Ireland ideology?

It was Mr. Arthur Griffith that came out with a programme that could be reconciled with the sternest detachment from British politics. In the pages of *The United Irishman* he published an historical tract written with ardour and epic sweep called "The Resurrection of Hungary." It began with a statement of the historical connection between Austria and Hungary and dealt with the Hungarian revolution and its failure. The subject of the tract was the reconstruction of Hungary after the failure of the revolution—the reconstruction by the Constitutionalist, Francis Deak.

Arthur Griffith's point was that by the passive resistance advised by Deak, by the refusal of the Hungarians to merge themselves with the Austrians, by the development of their local authority, and by their insistence upon the Hungarian constitution, they had forced the Austrians to recognize their nationality and their national rights. Ireland was like Hungary. She too had a constitution—the Constitution of 1783. It was taken from her by fraud as the constitution of Hungary was



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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taken by force. It was political ineptitude, Griffith maintained, to demand anything less than the restoration of the Constitution—the government of Ireland by the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland.

But how could the Constitution be regained? Obviously not by the agitation of an Irish Party in the Parliament of Westminster. The Act of Union had made the Constitution moribund. Irishmen who attended the Parliament in Westminster were recognizing the Act of Union. The first thing that Ireland should do was to insist upon the withdrawal of her representatives from Westminster.

Ireland had now her local councils and she should strive to govern herself by a general delegation from them. This would be the setting up of a Provisional Government. Nationalists should resort to Arbitration Courts and not to the Law Courts established by British authority. Agricultural co-operation should be developed so that Ireland might become independent economically. In brief the policy was Ireland for the Irish, with every Irish nationalist working for national protection. The Gaelic phrase, "*Sinn Féin*" ("Our-selves"), with its insistence upon initiative and

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### *Sinn Fein and Irish Ireland*

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self-reliance, covered the idea, and Arthur Griffith's policy was given the name "Sinn Fein." "The Resurrection of Hungary" was published as a pamphlet in 1904 and had a great circulation.

The Sinn Fein movement began to spread and to have an effect on the country. But now a Liberal Government came into power, and there was talk of a measure of self-government for Ireland. The country turned again towards Westminster. A form of self-government—it was called an Irish Councils Bill—was offered to the people and rejected by them because of the inadequacy of its administrative and financial proposals. Then the Liberal Government began to talk of destroying the veto of the House of Lords that had twice before prevented the enactment of Home Rule. Ireland was now filled with preparations—on one side preparations for the coming of Home Rule, on the other side sullen preparations to destroy it.

PADRAIC COLUM.

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## CHAPTER IV

### ULSTER'S OPPOSITION TO HOME RULE

**A**T the date when the Home Rule Bill was introduced circumstances seemed favorable to its passage. England, to a greater extent than at any time in her previous history, had been liberalized and democratized; South Africa, which had been lately at war with the British Empire, had been given complete self-government, and the federation formed there was being hailed as a great piece of statesmanship; the literary revival in Ireland had interested and made sympathetic the English intellectual classes. Of course the aristocratic-feudal party denounced the attempt to set up popular government in Ireland, but it was felt they were doing this as a political opposition—if they were in power they might pass a Home Rule Bill and call it by another name. The landowners in Ireland were now provided for, and many things in

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### *Ulster's Opposition to Home Rule*

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the realm of finance and high politics made some sort of representative government in Ireland desirable from even the aristocratic-feudal standpoint.

But there were interests that could not make themselves complacent to the coming of Home Rule; there were the Episcopalian Protestants who had long held all offices and all privileges in Ireland; there were, also, the powerful Presbyterian industrial and land-owning classes in North-east Ulster. These two divisions of the Irish minority heartily disliked each other, but there always had been an *entente* between them for the purpose of opposing power coming into the hands of the bulk of the people of Ireland. They had taught England to regard them as her "Nationals," and weighty appeals from them now came to the Conservative Party.

These appeals might have been marked as "read" if it had not been for the fact that other interests besides Home Rule were bound up with the existence of the Liberal Government. The Liberals had pledged themselves to a programme of social reform that included land-taxation and the destruction of the veto of the House of Lords. On none of the social

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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issues could the Conservatives hope to fight and win. On the subject of Home Rule, however, some intensity of feeling might be created. An effort was made to create it in Great Britain, but without success.

One part of Ireland could be relied upon to make trouble in the event of Home Rule being brought near—that place was Belfast and the North-east Ulster Counties. Could the trouble that would be generated there be used to drive a Liberal Government from power? That was the question which the Conservative Party chiefs began to consider. They thought there was a chance. Then the great and wealthy Conservative organizations set themselves the task of piling rancour on rancour and trouble on trouble in that part of Ireland which they designated “Ulster.”

And what exactly was the “Ulster” opposition? It included the Presbyterian farmers of the province, the people of certain small industrial towns, and that nexus of population, commerce and industry—Belfast. The use of the large geographical term was intended to suggest that a large and important Irish province was opposed to Irish self-government. The convenience of localizing an op-

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### *Ulster's Opposition to Home Rule*

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position allowed Irish Nationalists to let the term pass. But Ulster consists of nine counties—Donegal, Derry, Antrim, Down, Armagh, Tyrone, Monaghan, Fermanagh, and Cavan. In the nine counties of Ulster the Home Rulers at the time had a majority of one in the Parliamentary representation. Two counties, Antrim and Derry, voted Unionist; three counties, Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal, were solid for Home Rule; four counties, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh and Tyrone, returned seven Unionists and six Home Rulers. Belfast was the clenched fist of the Ulster opposition, and the temper of Belfast came from such a combination as this.

The chief industries of Belfast, especially the linen, ship-building and rope-making industries, are dependent for their existence on their export trade. The correspondence, the personal intercourse, the business interest of the average Belfast business man, are with England, Scotland, the Colonies, or foreign countries. He knows he can make a living under existing conditions, and he does not want an Irish Parliament. . . . Then there is the religious question. There are literally thousands of Ulster Unionists whose whole political creed is summed up in one sentence, "I would be a Home Ruler to-morrow only for the Church of Rome." There is a small number of Ulster Protestants who quite sin-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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cerely believe that they would be burnt by an Irish equivalent of the Inquisition. The reason why this little knot of honest fanatics have such influence over the rank and file is because, speaking broadly, the superior ranks among the Belfast workmen, skilled tradesmen, foremen and the like, are Protestants, whereas the labourers and unskilled classes are largely Catholic. Consequently, Home Rule to, say, a fitter earning high wages in an engineering shop, means a scheme whereby the unskilled labourers who work in the same shop would be placed in a position to dominate over him. He reasons from the only Catholics he knows to those he does not know, and he assumes that the Irish Catholics throughout the country are all like the unskilled labourers of Belfast. . . . North-east Ulster is the only part of Ireland dominated by rich and titled men. They distrust democracy as much as they distrust Irish nationalism.<sup>1</sup>

If it had been made plain to the people of North-east Ulster that a certain measure of self-government for Ireland was inevitable, there would have been conferences and concessions, ending perhaps in a federal arrangement within a single Irish state. But at the moment that sort of settlement did not suit the book of the English Conservatives. "Ulster" was aided, abetted, subsidised and encouraged

<sup>1</sup> From an article in the *Irish Review*, March, 1912.

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### *Ulster's Opposition to Home Rule*

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to fight against Home Rule by every outrageous means.

The threat was that, on the passage of Home Rule a Provisional government would be set up in Ulster and there would be Civil War. To give reality to this threat, a body of Volunteers was organized and armed, under the inspiration and direction of Sir Edward Carson, which openly declared that it would resist Home Rule by force of arms. Conservative politicians like Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. F. E. Smith (now Sir Frederick Smith, the prosecutor of Sir Roger Casement), promised the Ulster forces support and immunity.

PADRAIC COLUM.



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## CHAPTER V

### FORMATION OF THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS AND THE IRISH CITIZEN ARMY

**A**T the end of 1913 the Nationalists thought of arming. If men were to be armed to destroy a constitutional measure, should not men be armed to protect it? Besides, the Conservative politicians and the Conservative leaders were making the granting or the withdrawal of Home Rule a question of military honor—those who had conviction, organization, the will to fight, would get what they desired, and, as the Conservative press pointed out, all these were visible amongst the anti-Home Rulers of the North-east.

A distinguished Ulster Nationalist living in Dublin, Eoin MacNeill, professor of Early Irish History in the National University, now wrote a series of letters to the Gaelic League weekly, *An Claidheamh Soluis*,



EWIN MACNEILL



ARTHUR GRIFFITH

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### *Formation of Irish Volunteers*

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urging the formation of a body of Volunteers to safeguard the constitution that represented the will of the democracy of Great Britain and Ireland. Nationalists at first were startled by the idea—they remembered that men like Michael Davitt had been given vindictive sentences for striving to arm the people. And yet they could see that the arms embargo was no longer operative, for North-east Ulster was importing arms to the applause of Conservative England. Professor MacNeill's idea seemed feasible, expedient, inevitable.

I have before me an account of the formation of the National or the Irish Volunteers written by that good and gallant Irishman, The O'Rahilly. He tells how a dozen men met in a Dublin Hotel to discuss the plan with Eoin MacNeill. "As the invitations to that meeting were issued and written by myself," he wrote, "I am in a position to know something of the personnel of the original committee."

Besides Eoin MacNeill, they included P. H. Pearse, Sean MacDermot, W. J. Ryan, Eamonn Ceannt, Sean Fitzgibbon, J. A. Deakin, Pierce Beasley, Joseph Campbell, and the writer, and in view of the repeated assertions of certain eminently truthful orators and journal-

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## *The Irish Rebellion*

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ists associated with Parliamentarians, it is worthy of note that of the twelve invited only three were then members of the Sinn Fein Party. Lest it might savor too much of Sinn Fein, Arthur Griffith's name was deliberately not included, while Mr. D. P. Moran, the editor of the *Leader* and a consistent supporter of the Parliamentary Party, was asked to attend. . . . As we were all in agreement that the movement must be broadly National, and not confined to or controlled by any particular party, our first effort was to secure the co-operation of men prominent in existing organisations such as the Parliamentary Party, the United Irish League, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Foresters etc., and each of us was told off for special duty in this connection. But we found that the task was one of considerable difficulty, and refusals were the order of the day. Such refusals, however, did not alter our determination to maintain the non-party character of the Volunteers. In every case that arose of the appointment of committees, of officials, or organizers, or of public speakers, we insisted that all political views should be fairly represented, and we repeatedly refused to sanction arrangements when this condition was not observed.

In the same month, November, 1913, at a public meeting in the Rotunda, Dublin, the formation of the Irish Volunteers was announced, their proclamation was made public, and the enrollment begun. The response was

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### *Formation of Irish Volunteers*

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eager. The Irish are a soldierly people, and this was the first time in 200 years they had the chance to organize along military lines in defence of a national principle. But the government that had been supine while the Ulster people were piling up arms moved the day after the formation of the Irish Volunteers. An embargo was re-enacted. Henceforth the Irish Volunteers had to arm surreptitiously, and if the Ulster Volunteers wished to add to their arsenals they too would have to smuggle in munitions.

But the Irish Volunteers were not the first armed force organized outside of Ulster. A little while before the meeting that The O'Rahilly has recorded, the Irish Citizen Army had been formed. When we come to the Citizen Army we come to another root of the insurrection.

Coincidentally with the arming of the Ulster Volunteers there were labor troubles in Dublin, Wexford, and Cork. The Dublin troubles amounted to civic disturbances in the fall of 1913. Dublin, excluding suburbs, has practically the same population as it had in the eighteenth century—about 360,000 people. But in the eighteenth century Dublin was an

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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industrial centre and had a wealthy resident population. Her industries decayed, her gentry vanished with her parliament, but her population remained the same. Dublin can give adequate employment for about only 200,000 people. The city has a great brewery and a great distillery, but it is now mainly a centre for distribution and transportation. The unskilled, general workers of Dublin were organized by James Larkin and James Connolly as The Irish Transport Workers' Union. "In this city it was born out of a desperate necessity," James Connolly wrote.<sup>1</sup> "Seeing all classes of semi-skilled labor so wretchedly underpaid and so atrociously sweated, the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union taught them to stand together and help one another, and out of this advice the more perfect weapon has grown. That the Labor Movement here has utilized it (the sympathetic strike) is due to the fact that in this city what is known as general or unskilled labor bears a greater proportion to the whole body of workers than elsewhere. And hence the workers are a more movable, fluctuating body, are more often, as individuals, engaged

<sup>1</sup> *Irish Review*, October, 1913.

### *Formation of Irish Volunteers*

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in totally dissimilar industries than in the English cities, where skilled trades absorb so great a proportion and keep them so long in one class of industry."

"An injury to one is the concern of all" was the motto of the Irish Transport Workers' Union. James Connolly's article concluded with this fine vision:

Out of all this turmoil and fighting the Union has evolved, is evolving, among its members a higher conception of mutual life, a realisation of their duties to each other and to society at large, and is thus building for the future in a way that ought to gladden the hearts of all lovers of the race. In contrast to the narrow, restricted outlook of the capitalist class, and even of certain old-fashioned trade-unionism, with their perpetual insistence upon "rights," this union insists, almost fiercely, that there are no rights without duties, and that the first duty is to help one another. This is indeed revolutionary and disturbing, but not half as much as would be a practical following out of the moral precepts of Christianity.

The Transport Workers' Union had their headquarters in a former hotel near the quays—Liberty Hall—and they owned a piece of ground, Croydon Park, which gave them a base. In the strike or the lock-out of 1913 the



## *The Irish Rebellion*

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employers had been able to bring the Government authorities against the workers. The labor revolt was crushed and baton charges by the police had broken up meetings in the streets. One of the intellectuals who had allied themselves with Liberty Hall, Captain White, offered to organize a defense force from amongst the workers themselves. This was done. Most of the Transport Workers had been in the Militia. They were easily drilled and easily led. In a few weeks, say, coincidentally with the meeting to form the Irish Volunteers, the first organized force outside Ulster—the Citizen Army—was drilling in Croydon Park.<sup>1</sup>

In March, 1914, occurred what has come to be known as the "Curragh Camp Mutiny." A group of military officers declared to the world that if they were sent to disarm the Ulster Volunteers who were bent upon wrecking a government that the King, Lords and Commons of Great Britain and Ireland proposed to set up, they would disobey orders. That meant that the "Ulster Provisional

<sup>1</sup> Padraic Pearse was already training an Officers' Corps in his school, and Countess de Markiewicz had been drilling and arming a body of Irish Boy Scouts (The Fianna).

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### *Formation of Irish Volunteers*

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Government" would have immunity, and a chance to wreck a government that generations of Irish nationalists ardently desired. This was the first naked show of that militarism which President Wilson has well-defined in a recent speech—"Militarism does not consist in the existence of an army, not even in the existence of a very great army. Militarism is a spirit. It is a point of view. It is a system. It is a purpose. The purpose of militarism is to use armies for aggression. The spirit of militarism is the opposite of the citizen spirit. In a country where militarism prevails the military man looks down upon the civilian, regards him as an inferior, thinks of him as intended for his, the military man's, support and use." That militarist spirit was revealed in Ireland by the Curragh Camp Mutiny. It had the immediate effect of bringing thousands of recruits into the ranks of the Irish Volunteers.

In the summer before the European war the Irish Volunteers had attracted to their ranks the bravery and the talent that go into Irish revolutionary movements. They had important auxiliaries, one of which was a woman's organization, Cumann na m-Ban, or

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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the Women's Council. They were arming rapidly, but surreptitiously. They stood for a constitutional idea—the idea that a measure passed by the Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland must become law and operative. They held, too, that there should be no partition of Ireland—that is, that no part of Ulster should be erected into a non-Irish State. Whatever federal arrangements were to be made between North-east Ulster and the rest of Ireland there was to be one Irish State with a single executive.

PADRAIC COLUM.

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## CHAPTER VI

### THE EVE OF THE GREAT WAR

**T**HE next crisis came in June, 1914. Mr. Redmond, who up till then had scarcely concealed his dislike and distrust of the Volunteer movement, now made a demand on the executive of the Irish Volunteers that it should admit an equal number of his nominees—twenty-five to twenty-five. It was evident that the country wanted the Volunteers and the Parliamentary Party to work together and to avoid a split in the national forces. Aware of this feeling, the original Volunteer Executive accepted Mr. Redmond's ultimatum. A minority that included Padraic Pearse protested and withdrew from the executive, but remained members of the rank and file. The Irish or National Volunteers had now an executive of fifty, half of them definitely representing the Parliamentary Party and Mr. Redmond.

The Ulster or Unionist Volunteers had run

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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a big cargo of arms into Larne, a northern seaport, and Nationalists were under the impression that the authorities knew of the landing in advance and took no steps to hold up the arms. In any case the Conservative press applauded the Ulster success. The end of June saw the murder of the Archduke and his wife in the streets of Serejavo, and after that all political relationships became tense.

In July, I was with the Dublin companies of Volunteers when they landed a cargo of rifles at Howth, a little seaport a few miles outside of Dublin, and at the end of a street-car line. I was living at Howth at the time and I fell into the ranks as the Volunteers were marching through the village, just after twelve o'clock mass on a Sunday. There had been route marches for several Sundays previously and the men in the ranks on that particular Sunday did not think there was anything special at the end of their march. But as we swung down the pier a company was told off to guard that approach. Then we saw a yacht enter the harbour and run up a signal. We knew then what we had come for—arms! Rifles in their cases of straw were swung up from the hold of the yacht, and the Volun-

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### *The Eve of the Great War*

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teers making a chain of hands passed them on with cheers. These were the first arms that many of them had ever held. Here, where it is right and honorable to bear arms it would be hard to realize what the handling of these rifles meant to the Irish National Volunteers.

I saw MacDonagh there with his company, and O'Rahilly looking so soldierly in his uniform. I saw Eoin MacNeill quiet amid all that enthusiasm, doing necessary things patiently. His face had the quiet and the strength of flint and I felt that I saw in him the strong man of the movement. Then Darrell Figgis, the well-known poet and novelist, appeared on the yacht. It was he who had been sent to the Continent to purchase the rifles. They had been loaded on a tramp steamer that waited with Figgis in the North Sea for the coming of this yacht. They had been transhipped and the yacht had been brought here by two ladies.

Rifles were piled into automobiles and wagons, and with other rifles on their shoulders the Volunteers started back for the city in the early afternoon.

The telegraph and telephone wires had been cut, but some communication had reached the

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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authorities in Dublin just as the Volunteers started to march back to the city. Those who were nominally responsible for the government of Ireland—the Viceroy and the Chief Secretary—were not at hand. It was left to a police officer, Mr. Harrel, to take charge of the situation.

Mr. Harrel's instant idea was to consult some one in the Kildare Street Club. When one talks of the Kildare Street Club one talks of a purely sectional institution. No Nationalist is permitted to be a member. When Mr. Edward Martyn, the dramatist, became a Nationalist, an effort was made to expel him from the Club. The Kildare Street Club is the headquarters of the landowners and the military officers. Mr. Harrel went to the Kildare Street Club. He met there a purely unofficial personage, General Cuthbert, who advised him to intercept the Volunteers with armed soldiery. The personage who gave this advice was, of course, without any responsibility. However, the advice was accepted and acted upon. Midway between Howth and Dublin, at Clontarf, the regular and irregular forces met. A demand was made that the Volunteers give up their arms. It was re-

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### *The Eve of the Great War*

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fused. The Volunteers got away with the rifles. The military forces marched back, and on their way through the city they were hooted by an idle crowd, some of whom threw stones.

What did the military forces do who were assembled in this casual and unauthorized way? Their officer, Major Haig, gave orders to fire on the crowd. The soldiers loaded deliberately, knelt down and fired. Men and women were killed and wounded. The soldiers fired a second volley. This was the Bachelor's Walk affair that made such an impression upon Dublin people.

The catastrophe had come out of that militarism that has been so well defined by President Wilson—the militarism that is a system, a purpose; the militarism that “looks down upon the civilian, regards him as an inferior, thinks of him as intended for his, the military man's, support and use.” Something has been written about Prussian militarism, and an affair at Zabern in Alsace is often mentioned. The sincere opponent of militarism should keep both Dublin and Zabern in his mind. In Zabern a lieutenant named Von Forstner sabred a lame, unarmed cobbler. The lieutenant was tried by court-martial, dismissed from



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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the army, and given a term of imprisonment. In Dublin a major named Haig gave an order to fire on an unarmed crowd of men and women. Through his order men and women were killed in the streets of a capital city. The Major was neither tried, sentenced, nor imprisoned.

This military outrage made Dublin in particular and Ireland in general passionately resentful. And as the Curragh Camp Mutiny made one revelation, the proceedings of that Sunday made another. Government in Ireland, it seemed, had gone by the board. Irresponsibility had just gone too far when it was left to two casual people, talking in a smoke-room, to decide on a grave question of policy. There might be government offices and there might be bayonets, but there was no government now. And if some obscure people were using stray powers that had been left lying about, might not other unofficial men, with different ideas and another sense of what Ireland was, pick up and use these powers too? That was the question many Irishmen were asking themselves as the German armies moved into Belgium and Northern France.

PADRAIC COLUM,

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## CHAPTER VII

### PRECIPITATING REBELLION

**T**HE historian of the insurrection has to account for certain happenings in Irish public life in the eighteen months of war—the loss of accord between the Irish people and their parliamentary representatives, the determination of the Irish Volunteers to hold their arms at all costs, the production of a state of alarm and exasperation amongst the people. These happenings caused the revolt of Easter, 1916.

Ireland was swept into the war with a memory of citizens killed by British soldiers, and a sense of unfair discrimination between Nationalist and Ulster Volunteers. Yet when Mr. Redmond made a speech in the House of Commons proffering Ireland's full support to the Allies the country thought he acted wisely; there was an impression that he had met the Government half way, and that they had pro-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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posed some arrangement that was definitely for Ireland's good. The Anglo-Irish element—the large minority of Protestants and Unionists, were for war and the Nationalists thought that Mr. Redmond's attitude was having an effect on them and that the two Irish parties were approaching union. Then France was fighting against Germany, and Irish Nationalist sympathy had always been with the French. Belgium, a small country like Ireland, a Catholic country like Ireland, had been struck at. There lingered the instinctive feeling that any war that England engaged in was a war of conquest and spoliation, but for a while it seemed possible that the English and the Irish people would be at one.

But to the dismay of the Irish Nationalists the anti-national propaganda was kept up in England. Mr. Arthur Balfour made an insolent demand that the Home Rule Bill be dropped at once. Mr. Bonar Law, the leader of the Conservatives, continued to make furious speeches against the measure. Mr. Redmond in his historic speech had offered the Volunteers to the Government as a defence force on the condition that they were equipped and kept within the country. A month after

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### *Precipitating Rebellion*

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this offer had been made Mr. Redmond's adjutant, Colonel Moore, wrote to the press:

The Government had not taken one step to carry it (Mr. Redmond's offer) into effect. Not only had they offered us no arms, but they had prevented us and are preventing us from getting arms for ourselves.

The Government design, as many Nationalists saw it, was simple. It was to keep the Volunteers marking time until in weariness they joined the colours. Mr. Redmond asked that Irish regiments be allowed to display their national colours. His request was turned down. He had to complain that the exploits of the Irish regiments were systematically kept from the public.

On September 20, 1914, the Home Rule Bill at last was placed on the Statute Book, but the measure was not to be put into effect until an amending bill had been passed. The Unionist party was to collaborate in the framing of this latter measure. People knew that its effect would be to limit still further Irish powers, and perhaps to curtail Irish territory. The Home Rule Bill, people began to say, was an undated check, given with the assurance that when it was presented the nominal amount

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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would not be at the bank. There was even talk in the great Conservative journals of the measure being repealed.

A split occurred in the Volunteer ranks. Mr. Redmond during one of his recruiting tours had declared that it was the duty of the Volunteers to protect Irish interests where they were being attacked by the Germans—at the front in Flanders or in France. The original Volunteer committee thereupon reminded Mr. Redmond that the Volunteers had been founded to see that a Home Rule measure was put into operation, that that had not yet been done, and that until it had been done, their place was in Ireland. The Volunteers divided. Those who favored Mr. Redmond's policy called themselves the National Volunteers and those who remained with Professor MacNeill called themselves the Irish Volunteers. Colonel Moore, in his evidence before the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the late insurrection, stated that 160,000 Volunteers went with Mr. Redmond and 10,000 with Professor MacNeill. The Volunteers that went with Professor MacNeill were bound to become more and more uncompromising in their attitude towards the adminis-

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### *Precipitating Rebellion*

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tration in Ireland. The Citizen Army had its own leaders. There were now two centres of militant opposition.

Then came the formation of the Coalition Cabinet in England and the disappearance of the Government that had passed the Home Rule measure. Ireland was made to feel that she had been flouted and betrayed. Not only did the new cabinet contain Mr. Arthur Balfour, whose whole political life had been devoted to the anti-Home Rule cause, and Mr. Bonar Law, who had declared at a Unionist meeting in Dublin on the 28th Nov., 1913, "I have said on behalf of the party that if the Government attempt to coerce Ulster before they have received the sanction of the electors, Ulster will do well to resist them, and we will support resistance to the end," but it contained Sir Edward Carson, the Chief of the General Staff of the forces opposed to Home Rule. Sir Edward had taken an oath to resist the establishment of a Home Rule Government, and Irish Nationalists felt that he would not have taken office unless he had obtained some assurance that the Home Rule Bill would not be made operative in his time. Home Rule

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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was dead, people felt, or, at best, it was in a doubtful condition.

From this time forward three threats kept the Nationalist public in a state of alarm. One was the threat of actual famine. The Irish people have ghastly recollections of the famine of 1846-47. Then, as they believe, the food they produced was swept into England to pay landlords' rents. If there was a scarcity of food during the war their stock and crop, they thought, would be swept out of the country to feed the English industrial centres. The people relied upon the Volunteers—especially the Irish Volunteers—to guard the produce of the country.

The second threat was that of conscription. Ireland's effective male population had been terribly reduced by emigration and people felt instinctively that the loss of many more young men would have a grave effect on the Irish stock. This threat had been made real by the sudden hold-up of emigration of young men from the country. This hold-up was made with every circumstance of insult and injury. Conscription was carried for England, and Ireland was exempted. Every one knew that the cause of exemption was the Vol-

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### *Precipitating Rebellion*

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unteers. They knew, too, that if the Volunteers were broken up conscription would be applied. Those who belonged to the National Volunteers now entered the ranks of the Irish Volunteers, and from this time on the latter body began to gain steadily in numbers, and more and more the country looked to them. The watchword of the Volunteers now was, "We will defend our arms with our lives."

There was a threat of a taxation that would leave hardly any margin of subsistence. In 1896 a British Commission had declared that the taxation of Ireland was then dangerously encroaching on subsistence, but since that verdict had been given the burthen of taxation has been continuously increased. A new burthen was threatening. There was an agitation through the country against further increases, and the foremost authority on Irish finances, Mr. Thomas Sexton, wrote:

Capital, industry, enterprise, labor, wages, all must shrink, and the very foundation of economic stability must be so strained and cracked that taxation may prove as potent an agent to force a second exodus as hunger was to compel the first.

In these words he reminded the people of the greatest disaster in the Irish memory, the fam-



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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ine of 1846-47, and the terrible exodus that had followed it. It was the inability of the Irish Parliamentary Party to save the country from this devastating taxation that finally broke the accord between the Irish people and their parliamentary leaders, Mr. Redmond and Mr. Dillon.

More and more the Irish people turned to Professor MacNeill and the Volunteers that stood with him. In addition to these three threats there were all sorts of pin-pricks that had the most exasperating effect. Journals were suppressed. Men were threatened with deportation. People were being arrested on the mere word of a policeman. Just before the insurrection there were as many as five hundred people in gaol under the Defence of the Realm Act. It looked, too, as if there was to be a revival of the old prosecution of the Irish language. A gentleman was fined and sent to prison for answering a policeman in Gaelic in a Gaelic-speaking district. "This seemed an astonishing piece of folly and bigotry," Colonel Moore stated in his evidence, "well-calculated to raise the anger and indignation of the people who have very strong sentiments on the subject. I went to head-

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### *Precipitating Rebellion*

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quarters and warned the intelligence officer that this act alone would treble the number of Sinn Feiners in the country. He did not agree with me; many of these people have no conception of the intellectual movement in Ireland or indeed anywhere; they have narrow views of life, and are a great impediment to the government of the country."

All the time the people believed that a frontal attack would soon be made on the Irish Volunteers. In a letter written to *The New Statesman* three weeks before the insurrection, Mr. Sheehy-Skeffington declared that officers in the Dublin Clubs and streets were saying that they would prefer to have a shot at the Sinn Feiners (by which they meant the Irish Volunteers) than at the Germans. Mr. Sheehy-Skeffington declared that the conduct of these officers was becoming intolerable, and that it looked very much as if they wanted to drive the people into revolt. Unfortunately, the editors of *The New Statesman* did not see fit to publish this communication until the insurrection had broken out and until the brave Francis Sheehy-Skeffington had been murdered by one of these officers whilst "temporarily insane."

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Sheehy-Skeffington wrote:

*To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN.*

SIR,—The situation in Ireland is extremely grave. Thanks to the silence of the daily Press, the military authorities are pursuing their Prussian plans in Ireland unobserved by the British public; and, when the explosion which they have provoked occurs, they will endeavor to delude the British public as to where the responsibility lies. I write in the hope that, despite war-fever, there may be enough sanity and commonsense left to restrain the militarists while there is yet time.

I will not take up your space by recounting the events that have led up to the present situation—the two years' immunity accorded Sir Edward Carson's Volunteers in their defiant illegalities, the systematic persecution of the Irish Volunteers *from the moment of their formation (nine months before the war)*, the militarist provocations, raids on printing offices, arbitrary deportations, and savage sentences which have punctuated Mr. Redmond's recruiting appeals for the past eighteen months. As a result of this recent series of events, Irish Nationalist and Labour opinion is now in a state of extreme exasperation. Recruiting for the British Army is dead; recruiting for the Irish Volunteers has, at the moment, almost reached the mark of 1,000 per week—which is Lord Wimborne's demand for the British Army. A special stimulus has been given to the Irish Volunteer movement by the arrest and threatened forcible deportation (at the moment of writing it is still uncertain whether the threat will be carried out) of two of its most active organisers.

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### *Precipitating Rebellion*

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There are two distinct danger-points in the position. In the first place, the Irish Volunteers are prepared, if any attempt is made forcibly to disarm them, to resist, and to defend their rifles with their lives. In the second place, the Irish Citizen Army (the Labour Volunteers) are prepared to offer similar resistance, not only to disarmament, but to any attack upon the Press which turns out the *Workers' Republic*—successor to the suppressed *Irish Worker*—which is printed in Liberty Hall.

There is no bluff in either case. That was shown (1) in Tullamore on March 20th, when an attempt at disarming the small local corps of Irish Volunteers was met with revolver shots and a policeman was wounded—fortunately not seriously; (2) in Dublin, on March 24th and following days, when, at the rumour of an intended raid on the *Workers' Republic*, the Irish Citizen Army stood guard night and day in Liberty Hall—many of them having thrown up their jobs to answer promptly the mobilisation order—armed and prepared to sell their lives dearly. The British military authorities in Ireland know perfectly well that the members of both these organisations are earnest, determined men. If, knowing this, General Friend and his subordinate militarists proceed either to disarm the Volunteers or to raid the Labour Press, it can only be because they *want* bloodshed—because they want to provoke another '98, and to get an excuse for a machine-gun massacre.

Irish pacifists who have watched the situation closely are convinced that this is precisely what the militarists do want. The younger English officers in Dublin make no secret of their eagerness "to have a whack at the Sinn Feiners"; they would much rather fight them than the

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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Germans. They are spurred on by the Carson-Northcliffe conscriptionist gang in London; on April 5th the *Morning Post* vehemently demanded the suppression of the *Workers' Republic*; on April 6th a question was put down in the House of Commons urging Mr. Birrell to disarm the Irish Volunteers. These gentry know well the precise points where a pogrom can most easily be started.

Twice already General Friend has been on the point of setting Ireland in a blaze—once last November, when he had a warrant made out for the arrest of Bishop O'Dwyer, of Limerick; once on March 25th, when he had a detachment of soldiers with machine guns in readiness to raid Liberty Hall. In both cases Mr. Birrell intervened in the nick of time and decisively vetoed the militarist plans. But some day Mr. Birrell may be overborne or may intervene too late. Then, once bloodshed is started in Ireland, who can say where or how it will end?

In the midst of the world-wide carnage, bloodshed in our little island may seem a trivial thing. The wiping out of all the Irish Nationalist and Labour Volunteers would hardly involve as much slaughter as the single Battle of Loos. Doubtless that is the military calculation—that their crime may be overlooked in a world of criminals. Accordingly, the nearer peace comes the more eager will they be to force a conflict before their chance vanishes. Is there in Great Britain enough real sympathy with Small Nationalities, enough real hatred of militarism, to frustrate this Pogrom Plot of British Militarist Junkerdom?—

Yours, etc.,

F. SHEEHY-SKEFFINGTON.

April 7th.

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### *Precipitating Rebellion*

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Meanwhile, for reasons not yet apparent, many of the Irish Volunteer higher command—Professor MacNeill was not amongst them—had entered a secret revolutionary organization—the Irish Republican Brotherhood. Using secret and open means and supported by an alarmed and exasperated public, the seven men whose names appear on the Republican Proclamation prepared for revolt. An understanding now existed between the members of the Irish Volunteer Command, representing the Nationalist business and farming classes and the command of the Citizen Army representing the Dublin workers. About last March the heads of the revolutionary organization were made to feel that a crisis had arrived. Several journals were suppressed and men important in the Volunteer organization had been arrested. Threats of conscription and disarmament had come up again. Public meetings were being held all over the country to protest against overtaxation and deportation of casually arrested men. On April the 19th a document was read to the Dublin Corporation that had its effect on the revolutionary preparations. This document purported to be a secret order issued to the military; it

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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was written in cypher and was said to have been stolen off the files in Dublin Castle. The authorities have since denied that this order was authentic and they state that what was then read at the Corporation meeting was a forgery. But if a forgery, may it not have been made by some of the militarists or the Castle officials who seemed so anxious to have an outbreak in Ireland? According to this document the heads of the Irish Volunteers, of the Citizen Army, of the Sinn Fein Council, of the Gaelic League, with other important persons, were to be put under arrest, and certain buildings were to be occupied on an order from the military commander. With this document made public the revolutionary group felt they would have to move at once or their preparations would end in such a fiasco as that of 1867. They resolved at least to show that Ireland was determined to back her protest by arms. A parade was arranged that would be the prelude of an insurrection. Eoin MacNeill, supported by others in the Volunteer command, issued an order forbidding the parade. His hope undoubtedly was that not enough Volunteers would attend to make it possible to start a revolt which he deemed in-

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### *Precipitating Rebellion*

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expedient. But although his order split and distracted the Volunteer forces, enough paraded to justify the leaders making an attempt. On Easter Monday the Volunteers and the Citizen Army paraded, and the revolutionists struck their resounding blow in Dublin and in the country districts.

The document which actually precipitated the revolution read in part as follows:

The following precautionary measures have been sanctioned by the Irish Office on the recommendation of the General Officer Commanding the Forces in Ireland. All preparations will be made to put these measures in force immediately on receipt of an order issued from the Chief Secretary's Office, Dublin Castle, and signed by the Under Secretary and the General Officer Commanding the Forces in Ireland. First, the following persons to be placed under arrest:—All members of the Sinn Fein National Council, the Central Executive Irish Sinn Fein Volunteers, County Board Irish Sinn Fein Volunteers, Executive Committee National Volunteers, Coisde Gnotha Committee Gaelic League. See list A 3 and 4 and supplementary list A 2.

There are instructions to the military and police officials how to act whilst these wholesale arrests are taking place. We quote:



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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An order will be issued to inhabitants of the city to remain in their homes until such time as the Competent Military Authority may otherwise direct or permit. Pickets chosen from units of Territorial Forces will be placed at all points marked on Maps 3 and 4. Accompanying mounted patrols will continuously visit all points and report every hour. The following premises will be occupied by adequate forces, and all necessary measures used without need of reference to Headquarters:—First, premises known as Liberty Hall, Beresford Place; No. 6 Harcourt street, Sinn Fein building; No. 2 Dawson street, Headquarters Volunteers; No. 12 D'Olier street, *Nationality* office; No. 25 Rutland square, Gaelic League office; No. 41 Rutland square, Foresters' Hall; Sinn Fein Volunteer premises in city; all National Volunteer premises in city; Trades Council premises, Capel street; Surrey House, Leinster road, Rathmines. The following premises will be isolated, all communication to or from prevented:—Premises known as Archbishop's House, Drumcondra; Mansion House, Dawson street; No. 40 Herbert Park, Ballyboden; Saint Enda's College, Hermitage, Rathfarnham; and, in addition, premises in list 5 D, see Maps 3 and 4.

PADRAIC COLUM.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### GENERAL NARRATIVE OF THE REBELLION

**S**HORTLY after noon on Easter Monday, April the 24th, 1916, the Irish Republic was proclaimed at the base of Nelson's Pillar, Dublin. The historic document there read by Padraic Pearse, setting forth with simplicity, dignity and passionate devotion the creed of Irish Nationality, was as follows:

Poblacht na H-Eireann.

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THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT  
OF THE  
IRISH REPUBLIC  
TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND

Irishmen and Irishwomen:

In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment, and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory.

We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and government has not extinguished the right, nor can it be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people. In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty; six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on

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# **POBLACHT NA H EIREANN, THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF THE IRISH REPUBLIC TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.**

**IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN:** In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment, and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory.

We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and government has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people. In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty: six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations.

The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.

Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishment of a permanent National Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women, the Provisional Government, hereby constituted, will administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust for the people.

We place the cause of the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose blessing we invoke upon our arms, and we pray that no one who serves that cause will dishonour it by cowardice, inhumanity, or rapine. In this supreme hour the Irish nation must, by its valour and discipline and by the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called.

Signed on Behalf of the Provisional Government,

<b>THOMAS J. CLARKE,</b>	
<b>SEAN Mac DIARADA,</b>	<b>THOMAS MacDONAGH,</b>
<b>P. H. FRASER,</b>	<b>EAMONN CANNITT,</b>
<b>JAMES CONNOLLY,</b>	<b>JOSEPH PLUNKETT.</b>

**THE PROCLAMATION OF THE IRISH REPUBLIC**

(See page 81)

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### *General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations.

The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.

Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishment of a permanent National Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women,<sup>1</sup> the Provisional Government, hereby constituted, will

<sup>1</sup> The progressiveness of this declaration should not go unnoticed.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust for the people.

We place the cause of the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose blessing we invoke upon our arms, and we pray that no one who serves that cause will dishonour it by cowardice, inhumanity or rapine. In this supreme hour the Irish nation must, by its valour and discipline and by the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called.

Signed on behalf of the Provisional Government,

THOMAS J. CLARKE, SEAN MACDIARMADA,<sup>1</sup>  
THOMAS MACDONAGH, P. H. PEARSE,  
EAMONN CEANNT,<sup>2</sup> JAMES CONNOLLY,  
JOSEPH PLUNKETT.

Pearse was elected President of the Republic and Commandant-General of its forces; Connolly was chosen to command in Dublin.

This proclamation followed the unrest which had come to a climax when news reached Dublin on April 22nd that a col-

<sup>1</sup> *Anglice*, John McDermott. <sup>2</sup> Edmond Kent.

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### *General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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lapsible boat had come ashore near Tralee, County Kerry, from which three mysterious strangers had landed, two of whom had been placed under arrest. News had also come of the drowning of two men wearing full Volunteer uniform in the River Laune near Kiltorglin, in the same county, through the overturning of a motor car which had lost its way. The two events quickly became related in men's minds; even those who were not in the inner councils of revolt guessed that another plan for freeing Ireland had gone a-gley. They were to learn, from an announcement made by the Admiralty on the following Monday evening, that:

During the period between p.m. April 20 and p.m. April 21 an attempt to land arms and ammunition in Ireland was made by a vessel under the guise of a neutral merchant ship, but in reality a German auxiliary, in conjunction with a German submarine. The auxiliary sank and a number of prisoners were made, amongst whom was Sir Roger Casement.

The German auxiliary was named the *Aud*; she carried 20,000 rifles, a few machine guns, and a million rounds of ammunition. When sighted by the British war vessel she



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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was ordered to proceed towards Queenstown, and held that course for a time. But before reaching the harbour, her gallant crew raised the German flag and sank the vessel, going down themselves with her, rather than let their cargo fall into British hands. It has since come to light that the Government had been keeping careful watch of the coast for some days previously, having been warned from America, where the plot to land arms in Ireland had become known when papers belonging to the German Embassy were seized irregularly in New York.

It is reported on good authority that the plan to start the insurrection at Easter was formed only when it became clear that the Germans had been checked at Verdun. The first plan was to rise when the Germans had hacked their way through to Calais, but with the heroic French resistance showing no signs of waning, a German drive to Calais passed out of the sphere of probability. Doubtless the Irish insurgents were so advised by the German General Staff, for they had, very naturally, followed the example of Washington in the American Revolution and sought aid from Britain's enemy. Although the Brit-

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### *General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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ish Government suspected this intrigue, it was unable to discover any evidence of it on which to make arrests. The rebels' plans were kept marvellously secret. For once no informer appeared to betray his countrymen. It is possible that the very audacity of the Volunteers in drilling openly hoodwinked the authorities. Had the latter been convinced of the imminent danger, their discussion of it would have been far different from the half-hearted speculation revealed at the Royal Commission.

With the failure of the *Aud* to land its cargo, the insurgent leaders were faced with the alternative of going through with a rebellion that was doomed to physical defeat, or of submitting to having their arms confiscated and their persons incarcerated, according to the threat, true or false, which had been revealed by Alderman Kelly as narrated in a previous chapter. They chose to fight, or rather the majority of them did so, for one conspicuous exception was Eoin MacNeill, the leader and commander of the Volunteers. MacNeill not only threw his influence in the Council against rebellion, but issued an order countermanding all parades for the Volunteers

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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arranged for the following day—Easter Sunday. He did not believe in facing such hopeless odds, and if the result of his action was to spare many valuable lives, he undoubtedly, as Mr. John Dillon said, “broke the back of the rebellion.” MacNeill, a scholar of European reputation and a man of scrupulous honour, must have found it difficult to part with those intrepid comrades. They, at least, bore no ill-will towards him. When it was all over, and the friends whom his gospel of manly nationality had inspired, were dying or dead, the chivalrous Pearse said of him: “Both Eoin MacNeill and we have acted in the best interests of Ireland.” To-day Professor MacNeill is in a British prison, and until such time as he deems it wise to reveal all he knows the generous tribute of Pearse will remain the justest comment on his action.

The countermanding order was published late Saturday night and appeared in a Sunday morning newspaper. It was as follows:

Owing to the very critical position, all orders given to Irish Volunteers for to-morrow, Easter Sunday, are hereby rescinded, and no parades, marches, or other movements of Irish Volunteers will take place. Each individual Volunteer will obey this order strictly in every particular.

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### *General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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Thus was a general rising prevented; only Dublin and a few counties rebelled.

The revolt was most serious in Dublin. The Volunteers were ordered to muster at ten o'clock a. m., as appears from the following:

#### DUBLIN BRIGADE ORDER

*24th April, 1916.*

*H. Q.*

*1. The four city battalions will parade for inspection and route march at 10 a. m. to-day. Commandants will arrange centres.*

*2. Full arms and equipment and one day's rations.*

*THOMAS MACDONAGH,  
Commandant.*

*Coy. E 3 will parade at Beresford Place at 10 a. m.*

*P. H. PEARSE,  
Commandant.*

At noon, while Pearse was reading his proclamation, the insurgent forces took possession of several strategic points throughout the city. For Dublin Castle, itself, they made no more than a mild attempt, doubtless because they occupied buildings which completely dominated it. It has been charged and denied that a policeman was shot in cold blood at the gate and that the military then appeared to drive

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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the insurgents off. Pearse took the General Post Office without much effort, thus obtaining complete control of the telegraph system and isolating Dublin. The railway stations were quickly seized; the rebels occupied Jacob's Factory, the College of Surgeons, the Four Courts, Liberty Hall and Boland's Mill without difficulty. Their headquarters were the General Post Office; all corner houses commanding the streets leading to it were garrisoned with snipers hidden behind sand-bags. Kelly's ammunition shop at the corner of Bachelor's Walk and Hopkins's jewellery shop were held in this way in great strength. Other houses along the main streets were also fortified, and immediately, according to one account, the insurgents set about the work of provisioning themselves. This they did, as they did everything else, in a strict military fashion.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The O'Rahilly, a very gallant man, a native of Kerry, and a descendant of Egan O'Rahilly the poet, was Minister of Munitions to the insurgents. Like Eoin MacNeill he opposed the rising; nevertheless he felt that he was in honour bound to stay with his comrades. He was killed in leading a charge from the Post Office against the barricade erected by the Sherwood Foresters in Moore Lane. Private Peter Richardson of the Connaught

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### *General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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For a time the Government made no counter-attack; they had been completely out-Rangers, who was taken prisoner by the insurgents, has told of O'Rahilly's chivalry.

"I have done my bit at Loos with the Irish Brigade," said Richardson, "but the like of the bombardment we were under at the G.P.O. I never witnessed. On Thursday the whole front was ablaze and Mr. Tom Clarke said to us: 'Boys, we want to look after you; that is more than the British would do for us. We want to get you in safety as far as we can.'

"On Thursday The O'Rahilly brought us to the room where we had been first confined and said to us: 'I give you my word you will escape with your lives. Have no fear.' More than one of us said a prayer for him then.

"On Friday morning the whole place was ablaze and bullets were whizzing everywhere. The O'Rahilly again saw that we were fed, saying that in food we would share alike with the Sinn Feiners. 'It's war time,' he said, 'and we're a bit short ourselves, but we have done the best we could for you.'

When the danger increased the prisoners were sent to a dark cellar where they learned from the voice of an insurgent that bombs had been placed, but the insurgents removed this menace. Soon afterwards The O'Rahilly placed the prisoners near the door where they could rush for their liberty, and shaking hands with them all, said: "Good-bye, I may never see you again. Good-bye and good luck to you." Amidst heavy fire the prisoners got away to safe quarters. O'Rahilly then mustered his own men for a final charge and, leading them, was shot dead.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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witted. Mr. Birrell, the Chief Secretary, was in London, and so little informed were the military authorities that the Commander-in-Chief was away and many officers had obtained leave of absence to attend Fairyhouse Races. They returned from their pleasure that evening to find themselves made prisoners of war by those "Sinn Feiners" whom, as Sheehy-Skeffington had tried to warn the British public, they had declared it would be more delectable to shoot than the German enemy. How far these pinhead soldiers were responsible for the insurrection it is difficult to say. Sheehy-Skeffington was murdered by one of them who was subsequently found by a court-martial to have been "temporarily insane." It may be that some time a British Government will realise that the relations of two great peoples should never be at the mercy of makebates and swashbucklers.

Dublin that Easter Monday morning seemed as peaceful as any place on earth. The minds of its people, strangely aloof from the horrors of the great war, for the most part, were bent on holiday-making. If they noticed here and there a group of Volunteers with their rifles, it was a sight to which they had be-

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### *General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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come accustomed, and the young insurrectionists gave no sign that they were on grimmer business than a mere parade. No one could have told from their quiet or laughing mien that with resolute minds they had set themselves to defy a power which, against a greater danger, had been able to call four million men to her colours. They had chosen their path deliberately; if it was to lead to suffering and death, at least the grey hag, Disillusion, would not hover over their end; their crown would be their consciousness that they had claimed her birthright for their country, and that in spirit they would have lived and died freemen. Such was their gospel; they did not fight for the body which perishes but for the soul which endures. Hence it is that we learn how hundreds of them on the Saturday night previous to the rising partook of their Church's sacrament before giving their lives for a cause which can scarcely have seemed more insane to, say, Sir John Maxwell, than was the Nazarene's quiet promise of resurrection to the arrogant Roman.

When the insurgents had occupied the buildings which they intended to use as forts, they set themselves to erect barricades in the



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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roads and streets which commanded the approaches to the city. In fact, their whole military plan was excellently conceived and, considering the comparative smallness of their forces, brilliantly executed. At some places through their paucity of numbers they did not hold out for long; Portobello Bridge, near the military barracks on the south side, was one of these. There they had taken possession of a public house overlooking the bridge, where their presence was only discovered when a military officer who attempted to pass was shot at on refusing to retire. At once a force of soldiers was sent to dislodge the insurgents, but was beaten back. Reinforcements were then summoned, and after a short and bitter fight the rebels were defeated. Elsewhere the barricades resisted all but artillery fire.

The South Dublin Union in the same neighbourhood was one of the few places where the insurgents had the help of machine guns; the distillery in Marrowbone Lane was another. The military laid siege to both places late on Monday, but with the insurgents contesting every inch of ground, it was not until Tuesday morning that the forces of the Government at

## 4.9.

94th Annual. 1956

1. The four city battalions will parade for inspection and route march at 10 a.m. to-day. Commandants will arrange uniforms.

Thomas Macdonald.

### Command and Control

Coy E 3 will  
Parade at Greenford Place at  
10 a.m.  
P. G. Spear  
Capt.

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### *General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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last obtained a foothold after several hours of bitter fighting.

Nearby, Jacob's biscuit factory, with its stores of flour, butter, etc., had been seized mainly with the idea of helping to provision the insurgent army, but this purpose was not carried out to any extent, for though the garrison that held it fought with wonderful bravery to retain it, a military cordon drawn around it effectually prevented its use as a base of supplies.

During the whole of Monday the insurgents occupied the positions they had taken up in the morning. The military, astounded by the cleverness of their strategy, made but little headway, and this only in the suburbs where the rebel forces were light. Against the strongholds in the centre of the city they battled in vain, being, in fact, repeatedly driven off with serious loss. The snipers on the roofs continued to exact a heavy toll in officers and men.

On Monday night, however, troops began to arrive from various parts of the country. From the Curragh, of course, the major number came. That huge military camp is but twenty miles from Dublin; the fact that the

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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railway line was in the insurgents' hands did not, thus, constitute a great difficulty. In some cases, however, the troops were forced to march the last five or six miles to their barracks, frequently under fire. It is estimated that by Tuesday morning the Government had 20,000 men at its disposal. Calculations as to the number of armed insurgents vary greatly; the Government stated that the Volunteers were possessed of no more than 1,800 rifles, but this is certainly under the mark. Probably 1,100 men were under arms in Dublin alone, while many more were ready to take the places of those who fell.

In all the outlying districts that Monday evening the sound of firing could be heard as various bodies of troops came in contact with the insurgent outposts. In Haddington Road the members of the Veterans' Corps—a Loyalist organisation—were returning from a route march to the Beggar's Bush Barracks. Between them and a party of rebels there was a sharp fight, which resulted in the fatal wounding of five Loyalists and the retreat of the others to their barracks, where they were forced to remain until the rebellion ended.

Martial Law had been proclaimed through-

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### *General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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out the city and county of Dublin on Tuesday; on Wednesday it was extended to the whole of Ireland. The Government feared that notwithstanding MacNeill's order, every county would be up in arms. From Skerries in the North of County Dublin had come the news of an insurgent advance which after capturing the villages of Swords, Lusk and Donabate threatened the wireless station. Troops were sent to repel the attack, but only when they had been reinforced by the Staffordshire Regiment on Thursday morning, and helped by the guns of warships, did they succeed. Further north, in Drogheda and Dundalk there was also some trouble; the disturbance in Drogheda being noteworthy for the fact that some of the National (Redmondite) Volunteers turned out to assist the military. At Ardee in Louth there was a short and bitter fight; Barmeath Castle in the same county was seized and held by the rebels for some days. At Ashbourne, County Meath, on the 24th, a force of insurgents defeated a body of police, capturing their rifles and ammunition.

Lest there should be trouble in Ulster the military authorities despatched a flying col-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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umn of three hundred men from Belfast to Dungannon in County Tyrone. This force pushed on to Cappagh and Carrickmore, and in a search for concealed weapons, confiscated three thousand rounds of ammunition. They also took prisoners a number of persons suspected of sympathy with the insurgents.

In Cork rebellion was prevented through the good offices of the assistant Roman Catholic Bishop, the Most Rev. Dr. Cohalan. On hearing the news from Dublin he interviewed the local leaders of the Volunteers beseeching them not to join a forlorn rebellion. The latter felt strongly that they should throw in their lot with their Dublin comrades, but finally took the Bishop's advice and agreed to surrender their arms on condition that these should be returned after the crisis was over. Bishop Cohalan arranged a pact to this effect between the insurgents and the military. Other articles of agreement were also arranged. Dr. Cohalan has recorded that while the military did their best to keep this pact, it was shamefully broken by the political authorities.

In Kerry the rebels made a small demonstration, but in Galway and Wexford they

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### *General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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held out for some days. In fact a serious attempt to capture the city of Galway was only repulsed by heavy fire from warships anchored in the bay after the military had been put to flight. In County Wexford the town of Enniscorthy was seized and held for days, the insurgents finally surrendering to a large force sent from Dublin in an armored train. In other parts of Wexford and the adjacent counties, there was scattered fighting.

To return to Dublin—the rebels seem to have made two bad tactical blunders, one in not occupying Trinity<sup>1</sup> College, and the other in occupying St. Stephen's Green. The occupation of Trinity would have given them complete command of the centre of the city, while St. Stephen's Green was easily vulnerable. On Tuesday morning the troops, hurried into Dublin during the night, were posted on the houses surrounding the Green and began with machine guns and rifles to rake the rebel force inside it. The trenches which the

<sup>1</sup> As the result of the insurgents not occupying Trinity, the military were able to establish a line of communication between it and Kingsbridge station, thus cutting off the insurgents north of the Liffey from those south of it.



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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latter had dug were of no avail against such a fire, and the position had finally to be surrendered without its having served much military purpose. It had, in fact, only proved a trap.

On Tuesday morning, also, the military brought up their artillery and began to attack the insurgents in the *Daily Express* building, one of the points from which Dublin Castle was dominated. When the artillery had raked the building, the troops were commanded to charge. They met with a fierce and bloody resistance; inch by inch the building was fought for, and when at last the military gained possession of it, there was scarcely a rebel alive within its walls.

Before the artillery made its appearance the insurgents had been able to keep the military at bay, but from that point on the various battles began to go against them. The barricades on the North Circular Road were swept away about mid-day on Tuesday, the rebels losing forty dead in the unequal fight, and 100 prisoners. With this and other victories the military gained possession of the north side and had the rebellion completely in check there except for a small force which

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### *General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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escaped into Glasnevin Cemetery. Further rebel positions were also taken in the south side; the net was being drawn much closer around those who were to make the chief fight in the central strongholds.

The military made no sustained, general attempt to take these strongholds on Tuesday because the approaches to them were so well guarded that they could not have been rushed except at an enormous sacrifice of life. But by Wednesday morning their successes in the suburbs enabled them to draw closer and closer to that group of positions whose centre and inspiration were in the General Post Office. As they drew nearer they began to pay a heavier toll for their advance; the insurgent snipers were unwearying, and drill had made their aim accurate. It was fighting of the most nerve-racking kind on both sides, for the fighters were for the most part concealed.

Liberty Hall held a strong garrison of insurgents for a time; on the roofs between it and O'Connell Bridge snipers gave the military a busy time, until about eight o'clock on Wednesday morning when a gunboat came up the Liffey and began to throw shells which soon destroyed the hall, the roof and the in-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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terior of the building. Troops were then able to take secure possession of all the district between Trinity College and the Liffey, even though many of them were still being picked off from Kelly's store. It was clear that these snipers must be silenced before any further advance could be made, and accordingly the forces of the Crown brought a nine-pounder into position at Trinity College, facing D'Olier Street, and began to bombard "Kelly's Fort," as it is now called.

Inch by inch the military edged forward under the cover of their artillery, but the vastly superior forces and the hopelessness of their position did not deter the rebels from exacting the utmost tribute for their lives. Fire had appeared on Tuesday evening as the result of an explosion caused by a looting crowd in one of the houses near the General Post Office. For the looting the rebels were in no way responsible. It did not occur to any extent, considering the opportunity, and wherever the insurgent leaders could put it down they did so, according to the testimony of Loyalist officers taken prisoners by them.

The artillery wrought havoc upon havoc, but it is difficult to see how else the insurgents

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### *General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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were to be suppressed. All day Thursday and all Friday the rattle and roar of big guns made the centre of the city an inferno. The streets were swept by machine guns. In many houses non-combatants were huddled piteously, unable to stir out. Many people, in fact, were confined to their houses or offices from the first shot of the rebellion until the last.

During the last days fire broke out in all its horrors.<sup>1</sup> The Hotel Metropole and the whole block of buildings for a long distance down Middle Abbey Street were burned down. They were all close to the General Post Office, and were the victims of shells intended for it. At last the Post Office itself also took fire and became untenable for the insurgents, many of whom died within its walls; many, too, retreating to other "forts," were swept into eternity by the relentless machine guns.

This terrible street fighting continued day and night until Saturday. On both sides,

<sup>1</sup> \$12,500,000 was put down as the value of the buildings destroyed during the rebellion. Two hundred buildings were involved according to Captain Purcell, head of the Dublin Fire Brigade.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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deeds of extraordinary heroism have been recorded. It is clear that the rebels did not surrender until their ammunition was exhausted.

The order to surrender, signed by Padraic Pearse, ran as follows:

In order to prevent further slaughter of unarmed people and in the hope of saving the lives of our followers, now surrounded and hopelessly outnumbered, members of the Provisional Government at present at headquarters have agreed to unconditional surrender, and the commanders of all units of the republican forces will order their followers to lay down their arms.

It was dated "29th April, 1916, 3.45 P. M." Pearse signed it in the presence of Brigadier-General Lowe to whom he had surrendered unconditionally after the latter had refused to grant any terms. Directly it was signed, it was taken to Connolly and to MacDonagh who added the following:

I agree to the conditions for the men only under my command in the Moore Street District and for the men in the Stephen's Green Command.

JAMES CONNOLLY,

April 29th, 1916.

On consultation with Commandant Ceannt and other officers I have decided to agree to unconditional surrender also.

THOMAS MACDONAGH.

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*General Narrative of the Rebellion*

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But although the military gave the order to cease fire on Saturday afternoon, the streets of Dublin did not become quite safe for a couple of days following, because, as shall be related, individual snipers who did not get word of the surrender, and some of them who did, but who preferred to meet death where they were, held on grimly to their positions.

MAURICE JOY.

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## CHAPTER IX

### THE DUBLIN "FORTS"

**M**OST of those who held the insurgent forts in Dublin during the terrible Easter Week of 1916 are now either dead or in British prisons. Of those who escaped a few have found their way to America, and from their accounts and the contemporary Irish newspapers it is possible to get a clear and stirring, if not altogether comprehensive, idea of what took place at the various centres of fighting. But since from the very nature of the fighting—each zone ringed round with fire—individual witnesses saw but a small portion of what took place, it may be some years before the full details are known. There was no general battle between the military and the insurgents; there was but little street fighting in the ordinary sense of that term; what there was, was even more hellish—sniping and house-to-house fighting, with high explosives

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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battering down the walls upon the heads of the defenders, and machine guns sweeping them to death as they endeavoured to escape. Volunteers and soldiers alike—and the Battle of Dublin is the record of heroism on the part of both—must have wished for the open field, either trench or charge.

The cleverness of the insurgents' strategic plan has been referred to in the preceding chapter; had the number of men which it called for been at their disposal, there is little doubt that they would have been capable of a much prolonged resistance. The world would probably have been as greatly amazed at the military technique of this citizen army as it was at its courage. But since the counter-manding order prevented that, we have only to record an insurrection of nearly six days which, fought with terrible bitterness, has left scars likely to endure, unfortunately, long after the nations now struggling all over Europe have rearranged their alliances.

The principal insurgent forts, as stated in the last chapter, were the General Post Office, Jacob's Factory, the South Dublin Union, Liberty Hall, St. Stephen's Green, the Four Courts, and Boland's Mill.



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## *The Irish Rebellion*

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### **THE GENERAL POST OFFICE**

There is a note in Joseph Plunkett's diary which was found on the body of The O'Rahilly after that brave man had been shot in Moore Lane when leading a charge from the Post Office, which reads as follows:

Easter Monday, 1916.—G.P.O. occupied in the name of the Republic shortly after noon (about 12.15 p.m.). Republic proclaimed.

About one o'clock a detachment of Lancers attempted to rush O'Connell Street. They were opposed at the Parnell Statue. A small number (described as "about twenty") succeeded in advancing as far as the G.P.O., but on our opening fire they retired in confusion, leaving a few casualties.

Simultaneously with our operations, positions were successfully taken up in the front and rear of Dublin Castle and troops in that stronghold prevented from coming out.

As soon as the insurgents entered the Post Office they set themselves to fortify it as well and as rapidly as possible. The authorities clearly had no idea of their numbers or they would not have sent a mere detachment of Lancers to take a position so well-placed for defence. Indeed, the Government was extra-

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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ordinarily lucky in the fact that this same detachment of Lancers had succeeded in conveying four or five wagons of munitions to the Magazine Fort in Phoenix Park just before the Republic was proclaimed. It is hard to understand why the insurgents, who were already in positions commanding the route the Lancers took, did not act more quickly. Their not doing so is a proof of the extraordinary discipline which they maintained, careful not to precipitate hostilities before the appointed hour, for it is impossible that those in position at Liberty Hall did not see the convoy, and we now know they could easily have taken it.

Having convoyed their cargo safely, the Lancers returned towards the centre of the city. By that time the flag of the Republic—the green, white and orange tricolour—was floating over the Post Office. The Lancers met with no resistance until they came to the Parnell Statue, which stands at the head of O'Connell Street, but there, as Plunkett tells us, they were fired upon. This fire did not deter them; they pushed on southwards towards the insurgent headquarters intending to rush it. From the roof, however, bullets

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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came thick and fast. Four of the Lancers fell, and their comrades, seeing the strength of the insurgents, turned and fled.

With this opening of hostilities in the centre of the city, the police were withdrawn to their various barracks, where they remained until quiet was restored. It is recorded by one eyewitness with gratitude, a week afterwards, that "on this day, May 3rd, the familiar policeman may again be seen on the streets."

As the Lancers retreated and the police withdrew, the insurgents began to take possession of various corner houses in the vicinity of the General Post Office. In all of them they smashed the windows to facilitate their rifle fire, and erected what barricades they could. Communication cords were stretched wherever possible between outlying posts and headquarters.

The battle with the Lancers was the signal for the appearance of the first ambulances, and with them a curious crowd began to gather in the streets. The mob had no conception of what serious business was on hand until a rifle volley fired in the air from the Post Office attracted their attention to the insurgent flag flying there. They understood then, but

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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they continued to take extraordinary risks. For the first couple of days of the fighting, until the machine guns began to sweep the streets, it was an ordinary occurrence to see a crowd huddled at some point of safety watching the sniping.

During that first Monday afternoon those within the Post Office were not seriously attacked. Companies of Volunteers were continually passing and repassing between there and Liberty Hall, carrying cases of ammunition and provisions. While they frequently proceeded at the double, it was obvious that there was no panic in their movements, and that all that they did had been definitely planned. Prisoners taken by the insurgents have testified that strict military discipline prevailed, and that every detail was efficiently attended to. Food was in abundance.

When the insurgents had barricaded themselves as well as possible, the main body was content to wait for an attack by the soldiers. But the snipers on the roof continued to pick off stray bodies of the military who, mostly in ignorance of the insurrection, were making their way along the streets. Many soldiers and officers were taken prisoners; motor cars

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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were commandeered to strengthen the barricades and also to be used by despatch bearers.

A British officer who was taken prisoner on the first day tells how O'Rahilly, one of the insurgent captains, ordered him to keep watch over the safe in the building. The insurgents were scrupulously careful to see that no robbery should be committed in their name. The same officer records how later on he was taken to the dining-room and given an excellent meal. This is related as an example of testimony very generally given—that the insurgents committed none of those excesses or cruelties often associated with irregular troops—and not infrequently with regular ones—but that they understood the rules of warfare and followed them.<sup>1</sup>

Considering what was to come, Monday may be described as uneventful so far as the force in the Post Office was concerned. But the commanders there kept in constant touch with their men elsewhere, and from time to time bulletins were issued telling of the progress of the rebellion. One who was there tells us that a spirit of the most joyous courage prevailed, coupled with a devotion which

<sup>1</sup> See James Connolly's last statement, page 370.

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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frequently expressed itself in common prayer. These men and women calmly awaiting death found in song and story a relief from their vigil; those who watched their fort with merely curious eyes later in the night could see figures passing to and fro arranging ammunition, preparing bandages, etc., but all they heard were voices raised to sing "A Nation Once Again" or "Who Fears to Speak of '98." That spirit continued to the very end. When, after the fighting had reached its height, a Catholic clergyman entered the building to administer the last rites to some fatally wounded, he found no signs of faltering courage. He found there one lad of fifteen, and tried to persuade him to desert his comrades. But the lad refused to do so. With explosives falling on the roof, and bullets spattering the walls, these fighters for a forlorn hope went about their grim business with a carefree air. Ireland can easily replace the quantity of men she lost in Easter week, but when shall we see their quality again? Let politics aside, and speak of them as soldiers, their laughing bravery, their courtesy, their chivalry—has the Soul ever captained a goodlier company?

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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On Tuesday morning matters began to be lively and casualties grew more frequent. An abortive attempt was made to blow up Nelson's Pillar. At 9:30 a. m. the insurgent leaders issued the following statement:

The Irish Republic was proclaimed in Dublin on Easter Monday, April 24, at 12 noon. Simultaneously with the issue of the proclamation of the Provisional Government the Dublin division of the Army of the Republic, including the Irish Volunteers, Citizen Army, Hibernian Rifles, and other bodies occupied dominating positions in the city. The G.P.O. was seized at 12 noon, the Castle attacked at the same moment, and shortly afterwards the Four Courts were occupied. The Irish troops hold the City Hall and dominate the Castle. Attacks were immediately commenced by the British forces, and were everywhere repulsed. At the moment of writing this report (9.30 a. m. Tuesday) the Republican forces hold their positions and the British forces have nowhere broken through. There has been heavy and continuous fighting for nearly 24 hours, the casualties of the enemy being much more numerous than those on the Republican side. The Republican forces everywhere are fighting with splendid gallantry. The populace of Dublin are plainly with the Republic, and the officers and men are everywhere cheered as they march through the streets. The whole centre of the city is in the hands of the Republic, whose flag flies from the G.P.O.

Commandant-General P. H. Pearse is Commandant-in-Chief of the Army of the Republic and is President

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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of the Provisional Government. Commandant-General James Connolly is commanding the Dublin districts.

Communication with the country is largely cut, but reports to hand show that the country is rising. Bodies of men from Kildare and Fingal have already reported in Dublin.

The defenders had organised a Red Cross force from among such members of the Cumann na m-Ban, the patriotic women's organisation, as were not acting as despatch riders between the various forts. Among them were also a few doctors whose number was luckily increased by the capture of an Army surgeon.

All through Wednesday the same sort of long range fighting continued, with ever increasing casualties among the insurgents as the machine guns drew closer. News began to come in of the successes of the military in the suburbs, but of their repulse elsewhere. The danger of fire increased. In the cellars huge quantities of dynamite, melinite and other explosives had been stored on Monday, from which bombs were manufactured for use in case of close fighting. One other use they served; under the direction of a skilled engineer, a tunnel was blasted under the street,



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## *The Irish Rebellion*

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and when the position became finally untenable, many escaped through it. While the fighting was at its fiercest on Wednesday, James Connolly, who was in command, was wounded twice. But he continued to direct the operations of the insurgents, and on Friday morning issued the following optimistic order:

Army of the Irish Republic  
(Dublin Command),  
Headquarters, April 28, 1916.

To Soldiers:

This is the fifth day of the establishment of the Irish Republic, and the flag of our country still floats from the most important buildings in Dublin and is gallantly protected by the officers and Irish soldiers in arms throughout the country. Not a day passes without seeing fresh postings of Irish soldiers eager to do battle for the old cause. Despite the utmost vigilance of the enemy we have been able to get in information telling us how the manhood of Ireland, inspired by our splendid action, are gathering to offer up their lives if necessary in the same holy cause. We are here hemmed in because the enemy feels that in this building is to be found the heart and inspiration of our great movement.

Let us remind you what you have done. For the first time in 700 years the flag of a free Ireland floats triumphantly in Dublin City.

The British Army, whose exploits we are for ever having dinned into our ears, which boasts of having stormed

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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the Dardanelles and the German lines on the Marne, behind their artillery and machine guns are afraid to advance to the attack or storm any positions held by our forces. The slaughter they suffered in the first few days has totally unnerved them, and they dare not attempt again an infantry attack on our positions.

Our Commandants around us are holding their own.

Commandant Daly's splendid exploit in capturing Linen Hall Barracks we all know. You must know also that the whole population, both clergy and laity, of this district are united in his praises. Commandant MacDonagh is established in an impregnable position reaching from the walls of Dublin Castle to Redmond's Hill, and from Bishop Street to Stephen's Green.

In Stephen's Green, Commandant Mallon holds the College of Surgeons, one side of the square, a portion of the other side, and dominates the whole Green and all its entrances and exits.

Commandant De Valera stretches in a position from the Gas Works to Westland Row, holding Boland's Bakery, Boland's Mills, Dublin South-Eastern Railway Works, and dominating Merrion Square.

Commandant Kent holds the South Dublin Union and Guinness's Buildings to Marrowbone Lane, and controls James's Street and district.

On two occasions the enemy effected a lodgment and were driven out with great loss.

The men of North County Dublin are in the field, have occupied all the Police Barracks in the district, destroyed all the telegraph system on the Great Northern Railway up to Dundalk, and are operating against the trains of the Midland Great Western.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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Dundalk has sent 200 men to march upon Dublin, and in the other parts of the North our forces are active and growing.

In Galway Captain Mellowes, fresh after his escape from an Irish prison, is in the field with his men. Wexford and Wicklow are strong, and Cork and Kerry are equally acquitting themselves creditably. We have every confidence that our Allies in Germany and kinsmen in America are straining every nerve to hasten matters on our behalf.

As you know, I was wounded twice yesterday and am unable to move about, but have got my bed moved into the firing line, and, with the assistance of your officers, will be just as useful to you as ever.

Courage, boys, we are winning, and in the hour of our victory let us not forget the splendid women who have everywhere stood by us and cheered us on. Never had man or woman a grander cause, never was a cause more grandly served.

(Signed) JAMES CONNOLLY,  
Commandant-General,  
Dublin Division.

The military had been pounding away with field artillery at such forts as they could reach, and on Thursday night they directed a heavy bombardment against Hopkins's store, which the rebels held in force. The place soon became untenable; orders were issued to retire to the Post Office. But few of those who essayed the journey achieved it, for as they

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# IRISH WAR NEWS

## THE IRISH REPUBLIC.

Vol. I. No. I

DUBLIN. TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 1916.

ONE PENNY

### "IF THE GERMANS CONQUERED ENGLAND."

In the London "New Statesman" for April 14, an article is published—"If the Germans Conquered England," which has the appearance of a very clever piece of satire written by an Irishman. The writer draws a picture of England under German rule, almost every detail of which exactly fits the case of Ireland at the present day. Some of the sentences are so exquisitely appropriate that it is impossible to believe that the writer had not Ireland in his mind when he wrote them. For instance:—

"England would be constantly irritated by the lofty moral utterances of German statesmen who would assert—quite sincerely, no doubt—that England was free, free indeed than she had ever been before. Prussian freedom, they would explain, was the only real freedom, and therefore England was free. They would point to the flourishing railways and farms and colleges. They would gently point to the consoling of M.P.'s, which was permitted, in spite of its deplorable disorderliness, to sit in a permanent minority in the Reich-

stag. And not only would the Englishman have to listen to a constant flow of speeches of this sort; he would find a respectable official Press secret bought over by the Government to say the same kind of things over and over, every day of the week. He would find, too, that his children were coming home from school with new ideas of history. . . . They would tell him if it was true that until the Germans came England had been an unwarlike country, constantly engaged in civil war. . . . The object of every schoolbook would be to make the English child grow up in the notion that the history of his country was a thing to forget, and that the one bright spot in it was the fact that it had been conquered by cultured Germans."

"If there was a revolt, German statesmen would deliver grave speeches about "disloyalty," "ingratitude," "reckless agitators who would ruin their country's prosperity. . . . Prussian soldiers would be encamped in every barracks—the English conscripts having been sent out of the country to be trained in Germany, or to fight the Chinese—in order to come to the aid of German morality, should English rebellion come to blows with it."

"England would be exhorted to abandon her own genius in order to imitate the genius of her conquerors, to give up her own history for a larger history, to give up her own language for a "universal" language—in other words, to destroy her household gods one by one, and put in their place

REDUCED FACSIMILE OF THE ONE AND ONLY ISSUE OF THE  
"IRISH WAR NEWS." ON THE FOURTH PAGE IT CONTAINED THE ORDER PRINTED ON PAGE 114

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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emerged the machine guns came into deadly play.

With this heavy bombardment the whole block of buildings from Hopkins's northward began to take fire. The flames spread rapidly, driving the insurgents from the houses, towards the Post Office across the street. There were many miraculous escapes, but most of those who reached the insurgent headquarters only increased the number of wounded there.

Far different from Connolly's order of Friday morning was the proclamation, full of spirit and barren of hope, which Pearse issued that evening:

Headquarters, Army of the Irish Republic,  
General Post Office, Dublin.

April 28, 1916, 9:30 p. m.

The Forces of the Irish Republic, which was proclaimed in Dublin on Easter Monday, April 24, have been in possession of the central part of the capital since twelve noon on that day. Up to yesterday afternoon Headquarters was in touch with all the main outlying positions, and, despite furious and almost continuous assaults by the British Forces, all those positions were still being held, and the commandants in charge were confident of their ability to hold them for a long time.

During the close of yesterday afternoon and evening

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## *The Irish Rebellion*

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the enemy succeeded in cutting our communications with our other positions in the city, and Headquarters is to-day isolated.

The enemy has burnt down whole blocks of houses, apparently with the object of giving themselves a clear field for the play of artillery and field guns against us. We have been bombarded during the evening and night by shrapnel and machine-gun fire, but without material damage to our position, which is of great strength.

We are busy completing arrangements for the final defence of Headquarters, and are determined to hold it while the building lasts.

I desire now, lest I may not have an opportunity later to pay homage to the gallantry of the soldiers of Irish Freedom, who have, during the past four days been writing with fire and steel the most glorious chapter in the later history of Ireland. Justice can never be done to their heroism, to their discipline, to their gay and unconquerable spirit, in the midst of peril and death.

Let me, who have led them into this, speak, in my own and in my fellow-commanders' names, and in the name of Ireland present and to come, their praise and ask those who come after them to remember them.

For four days they have fought and toiled, almost without cessation, without sleep, and in the intervals of fighting, they have sung songs of the freedom of Ireland. No man has complained; no man has asked "why?" Each individual has spent himself, happy to pour out his strength for Ireland and for freedom. If they do not win the fight, they will at least deserve to win it. But win it they will, although they may win it in death. Already they have won a great thing. They have redeemed Dublin

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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from many shames, and made her name splendid among the names of cities.

If I were to mention names of individuals, my list would be a long one.

I will name only that of Commandant General James Connolly, commanding the Dublin division. He lies wounded, but is still the guiding brain of our resistance.

If we accomplish no more than we have accomplished, I am satisfied. I am satisfied that we have saved Ireland's honor. I am satisfied that we should have accomplished more, that we should have accomplished the task of enthroning, as well as proclaiming, the Irish Republic as a Sovereign State, had our arrangements for a simultaneous rising of the whole country, with a combined plan as sound as the Dublin plan had been proved to be, been allowed to go through on Easter Sunday. Of the fatal countermanding order which prevented those plans from being carried out, I shall not speak further. Both Eoin MacNeill and we have acted in the best interests of Ireland.

As for my part, as to anything I have done in this, I am not afraid to face either the judgment of God, or the judgment of posterity.

(Signed) P. H. PEARSE,  
Commandant-General, Commanding-in-Chief the Army  
of the Irish Republic, and President of the Provisional  
Government.

Fire was the military's greatest ally. It enabled them to draw closer and closer, and by Friday morning they were raking the Post



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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Office with their artillery. From within came the sharp answers of rifle bullets backed by a machine gun on the roof. But the unequal combat could not last; by evening explosive shells had set the building afire. Vainly the rebels worked to extinguish the flames; by daybreak of Saturday the Post Office and the buildings near it were gutted, and the insurgents had been driven northward. There was nothing to be done but arrange the best terms of surrender possible, and, after a meeting of the Provisional Government of the Republic, a woman messenger was sent to Brigadier-General Lowe to ask for terms. The sequel has been narrated in the previous chapter.

No one can tell how many men were killed in the Post Office. When fire drove them in crowds into the streets, the machine guns, playing relentlessly on them, mowed them down. Men and women shared the same fate. During the week they had sung together, prayed together, fought together; together they went down to their death.

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## *The Dublin "Forts"*

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### **JACOB'S FACTORY**

At Jacob's Factory the insurgents held out even longer than at the Post Office, for they did not surrender until Sunday, the 30th. They had taken possession of it on Monday not only because it would help their commissariat but because it commanded Ship Street Barracks and was a position comparatively easy to hold. The Barracks stand in a hollow between the Factory and Dublin Castle, and were completely dominated by the insurgents all the week. Moreover, the houses in the vicinity are so placed that they acted as excellent outworks for the fort. A lane which runs around the building was not used by the military for the simple reason that it would have proved a death trap.

The insurgent force within the building numbered about two hundred and were under the command of Thomas MacDonagh; with him was John MacBride. The fighting there followed the same lines as elsewhere, but the military suffered more heavily. One of the most pathetic incidents of the insurrection is recorded in connection with it. The Factory is one of the chief sources of employment for

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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the very poor of Dublin, and they were in anguish lest it should be destroyed. Crowds of them watched day by day in terror lest their only means of living should be taken from them. It is doubtful if to them any abstract idea of liberty seemed very sacred—yet the patriotism of the Dublin poor, with their memories of Emmet, has always been famous, and there may have been as much method as pathos in their gathering around the building and saving it from the soldiers, who could not fire on non-combatants. For this story there is fairly good if not quite unimpeachable authority.

The building was finally surrendered through the good offices of a Carmelite friar who is said to have brought the insurgent leaders a message that the lives of all would be spared. This is scarcely credible for, as we have seen, MacDonagh surrendered unconditionally. But it is possible that MacBride refused to be bound by this surrender.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Major John MacBride, who organised the Irish Brigade on the side of the Boers, was a native of Westport, Co. Mayo, who threw over the Irish Constitutional party in 1895, and joined the physical force party. A man of good education, he was intended for the medical profes-

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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The insurgents at the South Dublin Union in the same district also held out until the 30th. It had been the centre of severe fighting, for the insurgents had posted snipers all along Dolphin's Barn, Marrowbone Lane, Watling Street, Kingsbridge, Kilmainham, Rialto, and Inchicore. These men remained sion, but became an assistant to a Dublin chemist. MacBride went to Paris as one of the delegates from the Irish Transvaal Committee to Mr. Kruger, then in that city, who told him that he "would never forget how the Irish Brigade stood by the men of the Transvaal in their hour of need." It was during this visit to France that MacBride met Miss Maude Gonne, whom he married two years later; the marriage proved unhappy. At the end of the war he was presented by Mr. Reitz with the flag of the Irish Brigade, with the inscription:

"'Tis better to have fought and lost  
Than never to have fought at all."

Under the general amnesty after the South African War MacBride returned to Ireland, and in 1909, at the celebration at Kilkenny of the anniversary of the death of the "Manchester Martyrs," he appealed to his hearers to "do all in your power to prevent your countrymen from entering the 'degraded British Army.'" Speaking at the same time of the prospect of a German invasion, he said: "Should they land in Ireland they will be received with willing hearts and strong hands . . . and twelve months later this land will be as free as the Lord God meant it should be."

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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at their posts until they were killed, wounded, or left without ammunition. When the force in the Union at last surrendered, there remained but a fraction of those who had taken possession of it.

#### *ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN*

The occupation of St. Stephen's Green would have been an important tactical success for the insurgents if they had been able to prevent the military from reaching the roofs of the houses around it. But this they were unable to do, and as a consequence the insurgents suffered heavily there from machine gun and rifle fire.

The occupation itself was carried out with notable military precision. About noon on Monday, the insurgents approached the park in twos and threes, every man carrying entrenching tools. At once details were told off to clear the place of civilians, and the gates were closed after the insurgent commander had selected certain houses overlooking the Green as posts for snipers.

Having closed the gates the insurgents proceeded to dig themselves in, and there they remained without serious molestation all

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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Monday. In fact they had complete domination of that district all the day. But on Tuesday morning the military in force reached the house-tops and began to use their machine guns. The shrubbery and the trenches they had dug gave the insurgents a great deal of protection, but they were gradually driven away from the outskirts of the Green towards its centre. They, on their part, were by no means inactive. The military, sheltered in the Shelbourne Hotel, were the objects of an incessant rifle fire and suffered heavy casualties. Sniping from the College of Surgeons and Little's Corner helped to reduce the effectiveness of the latter's fire.

At the College of Surgeons, Michael Mallon and the Countess de Markiewicz were in command. They had under them the force of Boy Scouts the Countess had organised, and the bravery of these striplings is beyond all praise. Within their fort they erected a mortuary chapel, and when not actually fighting, these intrepid boys spent the time praying with their dead. All through the week they were under heavy fire, but it was not until Saturday afternoon that they surrendered.

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## *The Irish Rebellion*

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### **THE FOUR COURTS**

Although the insurgents occupied the Four Courts all the week, no very great attempt seems to have been made to dislodge them. They had taken the precaution to occupy other buildings in the neighbourhood which served as an excellent screen, and although they lost one of these on Monday, the Mendicity Institute, they held the others until the end. Again the position was one of great tactical value, as it commanded the direct route from the Kingsbridge railway station—the station for Curragh Camp—and also commanded important bridges.

Captain Fahey was in command there, an officer who seems to have had his troops under perfect control. A most striking tribute has been paid to their discipline by one who was captured by them, a British officer, Capt. Brereton. Capt. Brereton was taken prisoner at a barricade near the Courts on Monday evening, and with several others lodged in the Judges' room. Their quarters were made as comfortable as possible, and as the days went by their captors, under all the torture of certain defeat, only became, Capt. Brereton testi-

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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fied, "increasingly civil and kind." The shutters on the windows were kept closed and the electric light turned on. On Friday the prisoners were removed to a passage to save them from expected shell fire, and on Saturday they were released very little the worse for their incarceration. What impressed Capt. Brereton most was

"the international military tone adopted by the Sinn Fein officers. They were not," he declared, "out for massacre, for burning or for loot. They were out for war, observing all the rules of civilised warfare and fighting clean. So far as I saw, they fought like gentlemen. They had possession of the restaurant in the Courts stocked with spirits and champagne and other wines, yet there was no sign of drinking. I was informed that they were all total abstainers. They treated their prisoners with the utmost courtesy and consideration—in fact, they proved by their conduct what they were—men of education, incapable of acts of brutality."

This statement of Capt. Brereton was borne out by the state of the Courts when the authorities again took possession of them. Apart from broken glass very little damage was done, and none of it appeared to be wanton. The safes containing valuable legal and historical records were untouched. In face of



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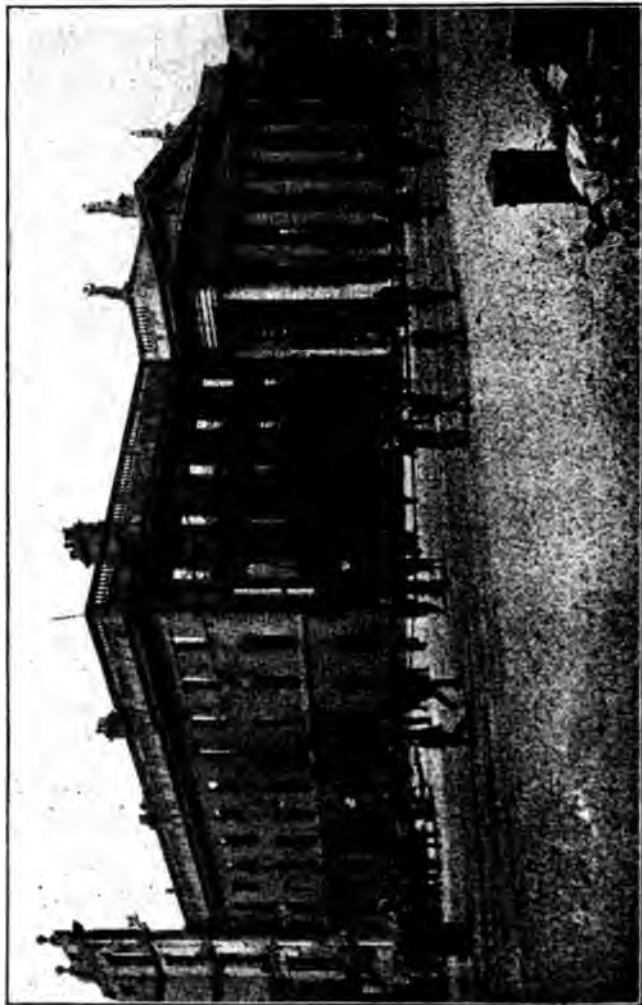
### *The Irish Rebellion*

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the charges and counter-charges flung around Europe to-day as to the condition in which the regular armies of the warring powers have left the public buildings they occupied, destroying priceless records of civilisation, is it not strange that we should have to look for the nobler method of warfare to a small band of irregular troops? But this was not the only instance of the insurgents' civilisation; they refused to use any church of any denomination as a fort, even after the military had done so.

### *LIBERTY HALL*

The defence of Liberty Hall was undertaken by a force largely made up from the ranks of the Citizen Army. It did not hold out as long as the other forts because it was the first to come under artillery fire. All day Monday, however, its snipers were busy, and the authorities suspected also that it contained a few machine guns. On Tuesday it was heavily attacked with machine gun and rifle fire, but the casualties among the military were so great that they were withdrawn, and artillery ordered up. It was decided to plant the artillery at Butt Bridge near the end of Tara



**RUINS OF THE GENERAL POST OFFICE**  
(Headquarters of the Provisional Government of the Republic)

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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Street so as to shell the Hall at a range of about two hundred and fifty yards.

But a difficulty here presented itself. The military commander saw that owing to the violent recoil of modern artillery, the ground must be dug to prepare for its trail. This would take considerable time, since Dublin streets are paved thereabout with large cobbles set in tar, and would involve exposing troops to a raking fire—if troops were employed. In that quandary, he used a subterfuge. He called for volunteers from the ranks of the loyal students in Trinity College. Six responded and, having been disguised as civilian workmen, were sent to dig up the street after a rumour had carefully been circulated that something was wrong with the College gas main. The six could not work fast enough and were soon reinforced by soldiers disguised as civilians. The insurgents at Liberty Hall were fooled by this, since they were careful not to fire on non-combatants. As a result, the military quickly got their guns into position. But one cannot help thinking that such a ruse might have involved the most disastrous consequences. It is easy to imagine how the intentions of other bodies of civilians

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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might have been misconstrued, had the insurgents learned of this trick; the latter would have fired and the result would undoubtedly have been a charge of indiscriminate murder against them when the moral guilt would certainly have lain elsewhere.

The two eighteen pounders thus brought into position opened fire in the early hours of Wednesday morning. Later on the gunboat *Helga*, which had been employed on patrol duty on the coast, was brought up the Liffey and joined in the bombardment. The *Helga* was unable to fire directly because of an intervening bridge, and it was some time before she got her range.

For over an hour this intense bombardment was kept up. The percussion shattered every pane of glass in the street where the guns were set. From the top of the Fire Station, the Custom House and the Tivoli Theatre machine guns also joined in the attack. The sound of the guns was deafening in the narrow streets.

And while all this was going on, what was taking place in Liberty Hall? Many of the soldiers at the guns were sniped, and the authorities continued to believe that the Hall

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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was held by a heavy force. But this was not the case any longer. The insurgents had got wind of the arrival of the *Helga* and had retreated both from the Hall and the two houses next to it which they had also occupied. They took up their positions on the adjoining roof, and it was from there that they exacted the heavy toll which had to be paid for shattering a building that had been for years a thorn in the side of the authorities. Curiously enough, this intense fire did not wreck the front of the building, and even after the rebellion was crushed its motto, "We serve neither King nor Kaiser, but Ireland," remained in all its boldness. No doubt Liberty Hall had served as an ammunition depot for the insurgents, but by the time it was shelled nearly all its stores had been transferred to the Post Office.

### *BOLAND'S MILL*

Boland's Mill was the chief point in a series of insurgent positions which ran from the Gas Works at Ringsend to Westland Row, and included Boland's Bakery, Boland's Mill, and the Dublin and Southeastern Railway yards. From this line Merrion Square was

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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dominated, and the road from Kingstown to Dublin via Lower Mount Street. It was believed that by this road the troops brought from England would most probably march. And so it proved.

Edward de Valera was the insurgent commander, an American citizen, who up to the outbreak of the rebellion had been a professor of science at Maynooth College. De Valera and his men were under continual fire from Tuesday until Sunday. The thrilling events of the siege have been related by an English officer whom De Valera took prisoner. He describes his captor as a man of remarkable courage who, when the military in superior numbers had gained an approach to the Mills and were pressing the insurgents hard, repeatedly risked his life to encourage his men. Two buildings flanked this approach whose destruction became necessary if De Valera were to hold his position. While bullets spat around him he took two comrades and rushing into the buildings set fire to them, thus blocking the way of the military effectively.

Several independent witnesses have testified to other fine feats by members of his command. From a house in Lower Mount Street

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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twenty-five of them held up 2,000 Sherwood Foresters for five hours. The latter regiment, indeed, suffered very heavily through the various engagements with De Valera's command. They fought bravely, but neither their tactics nor their shooting was as good as the rebels'. At times they were completely fooled. When they had waited for an hour to rush a house from which effective sniping had been done, they were finally ordered forward. The house fell to them without effort; inside was the garrison, the dead body of a Volunteer who must have been a boy in his teens.

De Valera's position was never taken. Pearse's order to surrender was brought to him by his own wife on Sunday at mid-day. An eye-witness, Dr. Myles Keogh, who had been attending to the wounded on both sides, testifies that De Valera then sent for the military and surrendered in proper military fashion, saying to the officer who came to him:

"You may shoot me, but my men must be unmolested when surrendered."

It was this care for his men that impelled the surrender. Dr. Keogh testifies that it would have been quite easy for De Valera himself to have escaped by an exit leading



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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to Great Brunswick Street without the military being aware of the fact.

De Valera was sent to penal servitude, and for a time the brave, chivalrous man was not allowed to communicate with his relatives. Better treatment might have been accorded one, of whom one of his prisoners, Cadet G. F. Mackay, wrote: "De Valera treated us most generously and his men shared their cigarettes, food and chocolates with us."

### *IN THE NORTHERN SUBURBS*

From Wednesday until the insurrection ended, all traffic was held up between the northern suburbs and the heart of Dublin. This followed a fight which took place in the Cabra district on Tuesday. The insurgents, as usual, had taken possession of houses commanding the approach to the city and, in addition, had erected barricades on the streets. They resisted all attempts to dislodge them until Tuesday afternoon when a battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers arrived from Templemore barracks. The military at once attacked both barricades and houses and found them only lightly held.

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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The insurgents who were not wounded, killed or taken prisoners fled across country towards Finglas and Glasnevin. As a result of this a strong military cordon was drawn around the whole district, and even people attending funerals were not allowed to pass. Glasnevin is the chief cemetery of Dublin; pathetic sights were witnessed as mourners were turned back, only the hearses and their drivers being allowed to proceed.

All the streets in Drumcondra and Phibsborough held snipers, and the military were compelled to exercise great care in their advance. But with the help of their machine guns they made steady progress from day to day.

### *THE ATTEMPT ON DUBLIN CASTLE*

The insurgents made no serious attempt to capture the Castle for reasons already explained, but about noon on Monday a small party of them marched towards its gates. They were fully equipped, and the gates were open; on guard were only a policeman and a sentry. As the insurgents approached the policeman saw that they proposed to enter

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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the Castle Yard, and he stepped forward to motion them back. But he was told to stand aside. Thereupon he drew his revolver, according to one account, but before he could use it, he was shot dead. The sentry, dodging another bullet, rushed for reinforcements, and before the insurgents could get through, the gates were closed. Having fired a few shots at the guard-room, and thrown a bomb which did not explode, the small company of Volunteers then withdrew. They were not more than twelve in number, but they were soon joined by others who had been detailed to take possession of buildings overlooking the Castle. This was quickly accomplished; the *Daily Express* offices and other points of vantage fell into their hands. When finally the military recovered these buildings, they found twenty-six insurgents dead in the *Express* office alone. They had fought from stair to stair and from room to room.

As in the case of the Castle, no serious attempt was made to capture the Magazine Fort in Phoenix Park, where the Government had stored huge quantities of ammunition. Its capture would not have been of much avail, since it could easily have been shelled. But

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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the insurgents evidently thought they would try to blow it up. They eluded the sentries by dashing up in motor cars at a time when many others were passing through the Park on their way to Fairyhouse Races. But they had very little time in which to accomplish their designs, as the alarm was at once given. They succeeded only in setting fire to the outer portion of the Fort where small arms were stored. For a time it was thought that the fire would reach the high explosives further in, but the military, arriving on the scene, prevented this, and after some hours the fire burned itself out with comparatively little loss. The insurgents who made this daring raid all escaped back to their headquarters.

### *AT THE BRIDGES*

At nearly all the bridges, or rather in the houses overlooking them, small companies of insurgents were posted. Sometimes barricades were erected also. By taking possession of Ballybough and Annesley bridges in this way, the insurgents obtained full control of the Fairview district until late on Tuesday night. Then the military began to make a

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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little headway against them, but no great progress was made even on Wednesday, when the soldiers took up positions with machine guns all along the railway embankment. It was not until Saturday that the insurgents were driven from this position. They had fought with marvellous tenacity, and when the battle ended only a small remnant was left which succeeded in making good its escape.

In the vicinity of Mount Street Bridge, some of the heaviest fighting of the insurrection took place. This was in De Valera's district, and it was by Mount Street Bridge that the Sherwood Foresters attempted to reach the city. As they did so they received a point-blank volley from Carisbrooke House, which the insurgents occupied, and retreated. As they fell back, they were subjected to a heavy enfilading fire from snipers. It was only when heavily reinforced by the North Staffordshire Regiment that they returned to the charge. This time they carried bombs and succeeded in ousting the insurgents from most of their positions, but all the time they were subjected to a heavy fire. The whole area bounded by Lansdowne Road, Northumber-

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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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land Road, Pembroke Road, the Grand Canal, and Upper Baggot Street continued to be a centre of the fiercest sniping throughout the week. Even after the main body of the insurgents had surrendered individual snipers on the roofs held out, not having heard of Pearse's order. Some of them had been without food for days, but they had still fought their forlorn battle.

There was, in fact, one very lively engagement late on Saturday night. A party of insurgents near Ballsbridge refused to surrender, although their rifle ammunition was all spent. They replied to the fire of the military with revolver shots until that ammunition also was gone; then flinging down their guns they tried to make their escape. But only a few of them got away. Again on Monday morning there was firing in this district; it was now the firing of men who preferred to die where they were than be shot in cold blood or immured in prisons, men of spirit, baffled and beaten, but with their wills unconquered.<sup>1</sup> One feature of the fighting in this perilous

<sup>1</sup> Even as late as the 4th of May the following order was issued by Maj. Gen. Sandbach, commanding troops in Dublin:

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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district which finds continual comment in the tales of eye-witnesses was the number of women who were engaged in it. They acted as despatch riders, riding from place to place on their bicycles, all the time under fire and never flinching, as the testimony runs. And at least one of them was a most efficient sniper.

A lady who acted as a Red Cross nurse during the Rebellion gave the Central News the following graphic account of the part played by women in the rising:

The Irish rebellion is remarkable for one fact not so far recognised in England, namely, the very prominent part taken in it by Irish women and girls.

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#### *PASSES*

From to-morrow, May 5th, 1916, passes are not required for any persons moving in and out of Dublin. But the cordon of troops all round Dublin will be maintained, and people will be required to pass through this cordon at fixed examination posts, when they will be subject to scrutiny by the civil police. This order does not apply to the Irishtown Area, round which the Commander, 177th Infantry Brigade, has established a close cordon. Only women and children are allowed to pass through this close cordon.

A. E. SANDBACH,

Major-General,

Commanding Troops in Dublin Area.

Dublin, 4th May, 1916.

Headquarters, Army of the Irish Republic.  
General Post Office



Dublin.

25th April 1916. 9-30 a.m.

The forces of the Irish Republic, which was proclaimed in Dublin on Easter Monday, 24th April, have been in possession of the central part of the Capital since it was on that day. Up to yesterday afternoon, Headquarters was in touch with all the main outlying positions, and, despite fire, and almost continuous assaults by the British forces, all these positions were then still being held, and the Commandants in charge were confident of their ability to hold them for a long time.

During the course of yesterday afternoon, and evening, the enemy succeeded in cutting our communication with our other positions in the City, and Headquarters is today isolated. The enemy has burnt down whole blocks of houses, apparently with the object of giving themselves a clear field for the play of Artillery and field guns against us. We have been bombarded during the evening and night by Shrapnel and Machine Gun fire, but without material damage to our position, which is of great strength.

We are busy completing arrangements for the final defence of Headquarters, and are determined to hold it while the buildings last. I desire now, lest I may not have an opportunity later, to pay homage to the gallantry of the Soldiers of Irish Freedom who have during the past four days, been writing with fire and steel, the most glorious chapter in the later history of Ireland. Justice can never be done to their heroism, to their discipline, to their gay and unconquerable spirit in the midst of peril and death.

Let me, who have led them into this, speak in my own, and in my fellow-Commanders' names, and in the name of Ireland, present and to come, their praise, and ask those who come after them to remember them.

For four days they have fought, and bled, almost without respite, almost without sleep, and in the intervals of fighting, they have sung songs of the freedom of Ireland. No man has complained, no man has asked "why?" Each individual has bent himself, happy to put out his strength for Ireland and for freedom. If they do not win this fight, they will at least have deserved to win it. But win it they will, although they may win it in death. Already they have won a great thing. They have redeemed Dublin from many shames, and made her name splendid among the names of Cities.

If I were to mention names of individuals, my list would be a long one. I will name only that of Commandant General James Connolly, Commanding the Dublin Division. He lies wounded, but is still the guiding brain of our resistance.

If we accomplish no more than we have accomplished, I am satisfied. I am satisfied that we have saved Ireland's honour. I am satisfied that we should have accomplished more, that we should have accomplished the task of overthrowing, as well as proclaiming, the Irish Republic as a Sovereign State, had our arrangements for a simultaneous rising of the whole country, which combined plan so sound as the Dublin plan has been proved to be, been allowed to go through on Easter Sunday. Of the fatal misarranging order which prevented these plans from being carried out, I shall not speak further. But

both the will and we have acted in the best interests of Ireland. For our part, as to anything we have done in this, we are not afraid to face the judgment of God, or the judgment of posterity.

(Signed) P. H. Pearse, Commandant General,  
Commanding the Army of the Irish Republic,  
President of the Provisional Government.

PEARSE'S LAST PROCLAMATION

(See page 119)



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### *The Dublin "Forts"*

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On Easter Sunday, which was the day first appointed for the Irish Volunteer manœuvres, and for which all the men were mobilized, the women in the movement were also mobilized and ordered to bring rations for a certain period. It was only at the last moment and for sufficiently dramatic reasons, that the mobilization of both men and women was cancelled. These Irish women, who did their work with a cool and reckless courage unsurpassed by any man, were in the firing line from the first to the last day of the rebellion. They were women of all ranks, from titled ladies to shop assistants, and they worked on terms of easy equality, caring nothing, apparently, but for the success of the movement.

Many of the women were snipers, and both in the Post Office and in the Imperial Hotel the present writer, who was a Red Cross nurse, saw women on guard with rifles, relieving worn-out Volunteers. Cumann na m-Ban girls did practically all the dispatch carrying, some of them were killed, but none of them returned unsuccessful. That was a point of honor with them—to succeed or be killed. On one occasion in O'Connell Street, I heard a Volunteer captain call for volunteers to take a dispatch to Commandant James Connolly, under heavy machine-gun fire. Every man and woman present sprang forward, and he chose a young Dublin woman, a well-known writer, whose relations hold big Crown appointments, and whom I had last seen dancing with an aide-de-camp at a famous Dublin ball.

This girl had taken an extraordinarily daring part in the insurrection. She shook hands now with her commander, and stepped coolly out amid a perfect cross-rain of bullets from Trinity College and from the Rotunda

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side of O'Connell street. She reached the Post Office in safety, and I saw Count Plunkett's son, who was the officer on guard, and who has since been shot, come to the front door of the Post Office and wish her good luck as he shook hands with her before she made her reckless dash to take Connolly's dispatch back to her own headquarters.

This was only one instance, but typical of a hundred that I saw of the part played by women during the fighting week. They did Red Cross work—I saw them going out under the deadliest fire to bring in wounded Volunteers—they cooked, catered and brought in supplies; they took food to men under fire at barricades; they visited every Volunteer's home to tell his people of his progress. I never imagined that such an organization of determined fighting women could exist in the British Isles. These women could throw hand grenades, they understood the use of bombs; in fact, they seemed to understand as much of the business of warfare as their men.

Sixty girls were released from Kilmainham Prison a few days ago, but others are still imprisoned, and arrests are yet taking place.

MAURICE JOY.

## CHAPTER X

### THE AFTERMATH OF THE REBELLION

**I**T is no exaggeration to say that the Irish Insurrection astonished the world. The loyalty of Mr. Redmond and his followers, and the bravery of the Irish troops at Flanders, Gallipoli and the Balkans, had been useful to prove that at least one small nation was content with her lot. The insurrection revealed the fact that the Irish question was still to be solved.

Mr. Redmond quite rightly stated in the House of Commons that only a small portion of the people were involved in the rebellion, but a witness at the Royal Commission who knew the country just as well, declared that had the *Aud* landed her cargo, all Ireland would have been in revolt. That is questionable; what cannot be questioned is that the methods used by the Government after the insurrection, methods of revenge and reprisal

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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by which hundreds of wholly innocent citizens suffered, awoke all the old spirit of nationality.

The Government made a mistake common to weak people; in simulating strength it fell into mere violence. The duty that it had failed to perform before, it would now perform with a ruthless hand. In all history there is not a greater individual blunder than the sending of Sir John Maxwell, a soldier who had failed in Egypt, into Ireland with plenary powers. This unimaginative man was delegated to deal with a situation which required the highest resource and intelligence. He knew but one weapon, a rigorous enforcement of martial law, and, to the outrage of history, he employed it mercilessly.

Think what the Government might have done! With 20,000 troops in Dublin, and probably as many more scattered throughout the country, no possible insurrection could do more than nibble at British power. There was a good deal of feeling against the insurgents by what may be called the "common-sense" element of the community. Bodies like the Clonmel Rural Council, the Fermoy Urban Council, the New Ross Board of

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### *The Aftermath of the Rebellion*

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Guardians, the Galway Urban Council—all controlled by Home Rulers—passed resolutions condemning the insurrection. These resolutions were not passed easily; they were passed by men who felt it a sad duty to condemn men who had given their lives for Ireland. When Sir John Maxwell had been a week at his work of reprisal, the spirit which had given birth to such resolutions had been swamped in righteous indignation.

No British Government ever had such an opportunity for conciliating Ireland and, for a hundred years at least, no British Government can expect such an opportunity again. Apart altogether from the humanity of treating as prisoners of war men who had worn uniforms and fought an open fight, it would have been the politic thing to do. It would have minimised the insurgents in the public eye, and it would have shewn England in a rôle of kindness which, however uncomfortable, would have had an immense effect throughout the country.

But the Government, heedless of the best opinion in England, resorted to ruthlessness. Mr. Redmond failed to reach the heights which an Irish leader in an alien assembly

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should have reached. He spoke of the insurrectionists without the least pride in their courage, and he bespoke for the leaders no mercy though he asked it for the rank and file. Nor did any of his followers do so; Mr. Ginnell, an independent Irish member, was the only one to protest. When the executions were nearly all over, and Ireland had been goaded into bitterness day by day, under martial law, Mr. Dillon made an able and passionate protest in the House of Commons, but it was too late. Probably with the possibility of a Carsonite rising after the war, Mr. Redmond may have thought that it would be impolitic to protest the executions. But if so, it was one more blunder; the Carsonites are built of much too stern a stuff to abandon their ideals merely because fifteen or twenty Irishmen were shot for their convictions. Far more likely is it that these passionate men would only be the more ready to prove their own sincerity.

Sir John Maxwell set up the first of his Field General Courts-Martial on Tuesday, May 2nd, and for a whole week they continued. Why they should have been extended over a week is unknown, but most probably it

### ***The Aftermath of the Rebellion***

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was intended in this way to add to their terrors. All the men who subsequently paid with their lives for their part in the insurrection were in the hands of the authorities on May 2nd. The courts-martial were brief, rarely lasting over a quarter of an hour. But day by day for a week the Irish people were exasperated by the story of fresh executions. Moreover, the troops which during the actual insurrection had fought cleanly, now developed a sort of berserker madness, so that Mr. Dillon was compelled to tell the House of Commons that Ireland was full of stories of men and women shot down in cold blood, of houses wrecked without warrant, and of people thrown into jail who had not the faintest connection with the insurgents.

The damnable record is this:—on the 3rd May, Padraic Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh and Thomas J. Clarke were shot at dawn; on the following day the authorities announced that Joseph Plunkett, Edward Daly, Michael O'Hanrahan and William Pearse had met the same fate. On the 5th, the life of John MacBride seems to have been sufficient to satisfy justice. On the 6th, it was announced that sentence of death had been passed on Countess



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de Markiewicz and Henry O'Hanrahan, but had been commuted to penal servitude for life. The Irish people and the rest of the civilised world hoped that this shewed an end had come to the orgy of horrible revenge. Sunday passed, and on Monday the authorities announced that they had exacted the extreme penalty from Cornelius Colbert,<sup>1</sup> Edmund

<sup>1</sup> One of the priests who attended Colbert, in Kilmainham prison, wrote the following letter to a Dublin newspaper:

DUBLIN, June 1, 1916.

DEAR SIR:—In last evening's issue of your paper, towards the end of the second news column of the front page, under the heading, "Last Moments of Volunteer Leader," it is stated that Mr. Cornelius Colbert "died joking the men who were preparing him for death." It is also asserted that when one of the soldiers was fixing the white cloth on his breast, to indicate his heart, he told them "his heart was far away at the moment."

This version is quite inaccurate and fanciful and I owe it to his memory to give the true one.

There was no joking, nor even the semblance of it. Poor Colbert was far too beautiful and too reverent a character to joke with anyone in such a solemn hour. I know well where his heart was then. It was very near to God and to the friends he loved. What really happened was this. While my left arm linked the prisoner's right, and while I was whispering something in his ear, a soldier

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### *The Aftermath of the Rebellion*

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Kent, Michael Mallon and J. J. Heuston.<sup>1</sup> On the next day Thomas Kent was executed at Fermoy County, Cork. On the 12th James

approached to fix a bit of paper on his breast. While this was being done he looked down, and addressing the soldier in a very cool and perfectly natural way said: "Wouldn't it be better to pin it up higher—nearer the heart?"

The soldier said something in reply, and then added: "Give me your hand now." The prisoner seemed confused and extended his left hand. "Not that," said the soldier, "but the right." The right was accordingly extended, and having shaken it warmly, the kindly, human-hearted soldier proceeded to gently bind the prisoner's hands behind his back, and afterwards blindfolded him.

Some minutes later, my arm still linked in his, and accompanied by another priest, we entered the dark corridor leading to a yard; and his lips moving in prayer, the brave lad went forth to die.

F. A.

<sup>1</sup> J. J. Heuston was a clerk in the office of the Great Southern and Western Railway in Dublin. He was the only support of his widowed mother and two sisters.

Following is a copy of the letter he wrote just before he was shot, to Mr. Walsh, his immediate superior in the railway service:

Kilmainham Prison,

Dublin, May 7, 1916.

DEAR MR. WALSH:—Before this note reaches you, I shall have said farewell to this vale of tears, and have departed for what I trust will prove a better world.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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Connolly, wounded, was propped up in a chair and shot. Immediately afterwards Sean McDermott also faced the firing squad.

Sir John Maxwell had issued the following order on May 2nd:

#### SURRENDER OF ARMS

I, General Sir John Grenfell Maxwell, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., C.V.O., D.S.O., Commanding-in-Chief His Majesty's Forces in Ireland, hereby Order that all members of the Irish Volunteer Sinn Fein Organisation or of the Citizen Army, shall forthwith surrender all arms, ammunition, and explosives in their possession to the nearest Military Authority or to the nearest Police Barracks. Any member of either of these organisations found in possession of any arms, ammunition, or explosives, after 6th May, 1916, will be severely dealt with.

J. G. MAXWELL, General Commanding-in-Chief  
the Forces in Ireland, Headquarters Irish Command, 2nd May, 1916.

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I take this last opportunity of thanking you and all my railway friends for their kindnesses of the past years, and I ask all to forgive me for any offence I have committed against them, and I ask all to pray fervently for the repose of my soul.

Whatever I have done, I have done as a soldier of Ireland, in what I believed to be my country's best interest. I have, thank God, no vain regret. After all, it is better to be a corpse than a coward.

Won't you see my mother gets all the assistance you

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### *The Aftermath of the Rebellion*

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This order was no doubt necessary; it is obvious that the authorities would have been fools if they had not tried to collect all the arms they could. But it was made the means of instituting a persecution which soon set the country by the ears. Everywhere they went the military and police acted as they wished. Their object was to strike terror; they seized men on the flimsiest pretexts, often taking away all the bread-winners of the family. These men were deported to England in huge batches and flung into prisons without being given an opportunity to defend themselves. Courts-martial continued to try men for treason and to sentence them to bitter terms in jail. No one will question the wisdom of that either, but it is questionable whether it was necessary to put men in solitary confinement and to endeavour by outrageous means to make them betray their confederates. Mr. Dillon told the dramatic story in the House of Commons of a boy of fifteen who was put be-

can give her and refund her the salary due to me, and also refund her the money from the Superannuation Fund. She will badly need it.

Gratefully yours,

J. J. HEUSTON.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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fore a firing squad and told to reveal where arms were hidden. He refused. The officer in charge of the squad had him blindfolded; the squad was told to get ready; the boy did not flinch. "Tell, or I give the order to fire," commanded the officer. "Fire away!" said the dauntless boy. It is to the credit of the officer that he spared the boy's life, but it would have been more to his credit if he had never persecuted him.

Sir John Maxwell continued his persecution in the face of all protests. Prominent Englishmen wrote to their newspapers, pointing out the folly of it all, but all to no purpose. The military authorities continued to arrest, sentence or banish people at their own sweet will. The case of Darrell Figgis, the poet, as set forth in the following letter to the editor of the *New Age*, is typical of many:

SIR:—Will you permit me to state the facts concerning my husband's, Mr. Darrell Figgis, arrest and imprisonment, as I think they may typify the conditions that have prevailed with regard to many of the indiscriminate arrests that have been made.

Rumours and the cutting off of mails and supplies were all we had to go on; actually we heard nothing of the rising till mid-day on Tuesday week following.



**BRIG.-GEN. SIR JOHN MAXWELL**

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### *The Aftermath of the Rebellion*

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During the vague rumours that flew, Mr. Figgis kept the people from alarm, seeking to discover where flour, etc., could be procured, so as to ease their anxiety. All that time he was engaged, as he had been continuously for eighteen months, at his literary work, and never moved beyond a mile from the house. Achill took no part in the rising, and there was no disturbance in the whole of the County Mayo. Mr. Figgis' connection with the Volunteers ceased after the split in 1914 (as the county papers may prove conclusively), when he differed on questions of policy with both sides, and *refused from both sides* when offered the command of the Volunteers in the county. He kept thereafter almost exclusively to his literary work; and only occasionally wrote a letter to the Press on matters of national policy. In one of those letters he stated quite clearly the causes that led him to cease connection with the Volunteers, Irish or National. Yet on May 11th he was arrested without warning or explanation. Twenty armed police battened down doors at daybreak, although no resistance was offered. That day he was lodged in Castlebar Gaol, and refused all communication with the outside world by letter or interview. On the 15th he was removed to Richmond Barracks under armed guard.

I followed to Dublin, and both of us by letter to, and personal interviews with, the Provost Marshal tried to discover what was the charge against him. I was informed that there was no charge. I decided then to employ counsel and solicitor to get some definition of a case, or to effect his release failing such a case. Mr. Figgis finally was permitted to see his solicitor and counsel on the 22nd, on which day I lodged with the Provost



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## *The Irish Rebellion*

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Marshal sworn information of his movements and actions for the past eighteen months. This interview was held in the enforced presence of an officer, in spite of protest against it. Having partially instructed his advisers, it was agreed to postpone the interview for two days while documents were drawn up and certain letters to the Press procured. *The following day Mr. Figgis was deported to England at half-an-hour's notice!* There was still no charge against him, and all my efforts to get a charge stated were deliberately baffled. After the deportation I learned (unofficially, yet on very good authority) that there was no actual charge, but that information had been given that Mr. Figgis was intriguing with Germany.

Even had he the desire for such a thing, any one taking a map, and knowing the conditions under which we lived, would laugh at such a suggestion. If this be the charge, why is it not brought forward in an honest and open way? Mr. Figgis certainly took part in the Howth gun-running, and this can be the only reason for his arrest. But surely Carson in the Cabinet after Larne, and Figgis in gaol after Howth, is too glaring an anomaly even at such a moment as this!

At the time of the Howth gun-running, the newspapers had employed the expression that my husband had "out-manœuvred" Mr. Harrel (then Assistant Commissioner of Police); as a result Mr. Harrel was dismissed. Mr. Harrel was shortly afterwards appointed to his present position as Commander Harrel, of the Admiralty Secret Service for Ireland, and, under martial law, had an opportunity to *effect a rebut upon my husband had he felt so disposed.*

In England Mr. Figgis was lodged in Stafford Gaol

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### *The Aftermath of the Rebellion*

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in solitary confinement as a convict. His food was indifferent, often uneatable, being but a lump of gristle in a thin stew. We were told that he was not imprisoned, but "detained"; though, in fact, as some of the untried prisoners stated in an official protest, they were receiving the most vigorous punishment, and *wished to know what this was for*. After a week of vigorous protest communication between prisoners was permitted, and food was allowed to be sent in from the outside. This some of them did, but many had no means with which to do so, and remained indifferently fed.

As a result of the insanitary conditions at Richmond Barracks (where 25 or 30 men slept on the floor of one room) most of the Irish prisoners were brought to Stafford in an indescribably verminous condition. To these unclean conditions I attribute the reason for Mr. Figgis becoming ill with a virulent form of measles. On his release from hospital he learned that orders had arrived (though there was no charge against him) that he was, with some others, to resume solitary confinement.

*He is now in solitary confinement*, without any cause given. Now I hear that my husband is to be interned during the period of the war. I enclose copy of the Home Secretary's order to that effect. According to the Defence of the Realm Act such an order can only be made when the person in respect of whom it is made can reasonably be supposed to be "of hostile association or origin." According to this present order Mr. Figgis is to be interned because he is "reasonably suspected of having favoured . . . an armed insurrection against His Majesty." I ask, what may this not cover, and how is it at all possible to refute so loose and all-embracing a charge?

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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As a matter of fact, owing to the methods employed in crushing the revolt, practically all Ireland may now be interned according to this. Is it of no avail to appoint a Tribunal to judge appeals against internment when the charge is so vague? I ask also is not such a charge actually *ultra vires*; or is the Act to permit of such indefinite extensions?

I learn, moreover, that my husband and a selected few are not to be interned with the others in the ordinary camp, but that they are to have solitary confinement extended to those conditions. That is to say, that they are to be kept in solitary confinement for the period of the war, although there is no charge other than this deliberately vague and comprehensive formula—and this, although in his case the facts are, as I assert, publicly in his favour, and although there was no disturbance at all in the County of Mayo.

I need not point out to you, sir, the financial embarrassments that are being created by such a course of political persecution. That fact remains, and the result is that this persecution will probably extend into a period of many years.

And these things are done in the name of Liberty and Freedom.

MILLIE FIGGIS.

So arrogant did the military become that on the 12th of May, 1916, Sir John Maxwell wrote to the Bishop of Limerick, requesting him to remove two priests from their parishes because of their supposed connection with the

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### *The Aftermath of the Rebellion*

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Volunteers. To that letter he received a reply which was not only a splendid assertion of civil rights, but which serves also to shew the pass to which brutality had brought the country. It ran as follows:

Ashford, Charleville, May 17, 1916.

SIR:—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 12th inst., which has been forwarded to me here. I have read carefully your allegations against Rev. ——— and Rev. ———, but do not see in them any justification for disciplinary action on my part. They are both excellent priests who hold strong national views, but I do not know that they have violated any law, civil or ecclesiastical. In your letter of 6th inst. you appeal to me to help you in the furtherance of your work as military dictator of Ireland. Even if action of that kind was not outside my province, the events of the past few weeks would make it impossible for me to have any part in proceedings which I regard as wantonly cruel and oppressive. You remember the Jameson Raid, when a number of buccaneers invaded a friendly State and fought the forces of the lawful government. If ever men deserved the supreme punishment it was they. But officially and unofficially the influence of the British Government was used to save them, and it succeeded. You took care that no plea for mercy should interpose on behalf of the poor young fellows who surrendered to you in Dublin. The first information which we got of their fate was the announcement that they had been shot in cold blood. Personally I regard your action with horror, and I believe that it has out-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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raged the conscience of the country. Then the deporting by hundreds, and even thousands, of poor fellows without a trial of any kind seems to me an abuse of power, as fatuous as it is arbitrary, and altogether your *régime* has been one of the worst and blackest chapters in the history of the misgovernment of this country.—I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant.<sup>1</sup>

EDWARD THOMAS O'DWYER,  
Bishop of Limerick.

To General Sir J. G. Maxwell,  
Commander-in-Chief,  
The Forces in Ireland.

As to the actual casualties in the insurrection and after, there are no reliable figures to be had. From the statements of Mr. Tennant and other ministers in the House of Commons it would appear that in the actual fighting about five hundred lives were lost, while over eleven hundred combatants were wounded. Of these casualties the losses of the military

<sup>1</sup> The sting of this letter will be appreciated all the more if one recalls that Sir John Maxwell was himself one of the Jameson Raiders whose lives were spared by President Kruger. And, talking of South Africa, the British Government have failed to give any reason why the life of Christian de Wet, whose rebellion lasted six months, should have been spared, and the life of Padraic Pearse, whose rebellion lasted six days, forfeited.

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### *The Aftermath of the Rebellion*

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were put at over six hundred. But the figures are almost certainly understated.

As the result of a week's courts-martial sixteen men were put to death, six were sentenced to penal servitude for life, one for twenty years, twenty-eight for ten years, two for eight years, fourteen for five years and fifty-three for three years. Twenty others were sentenced to terms of imprisonment with hard labor extending from six months to two years

The courts-martial continued for some weeks and then figures were increased, but no trial of note took place until that of Eoin MacNeill, who was sentenced to penal servitude for life, although "he had broken the back of the rebellion," and that of Sir Roger Casement who, three months after the insurrection had been quelled, was hanged in London.

MAURICE JOY.

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## CHAPTER XI

### REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION

**T**HE report of the Royal Commission appointed on May 10th "to inquire into the causes of the recent outbreak of rebellion in Ireland, and into the conduct and the degree of responsibility of the civil and military executive in Ireland in connection therewith," was issued early in July. The Commissioners were Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, K.G.; Sir Montague Shearman, Kt., a Judge of the English High Court of Justice; and Sir Mackenzie Dalzell Chalmers, K.C.B.

The Commissioners reported that they had held nine meetings—five in London and four in Dublin. They had examined twenty-nine witnesses, all of whom were examined in public, except in so far as their evidence dealt with German intrigues or police information; four other persons had submitted signed statements, which appeared in an appendix. Also

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### *Report of the Royal Commission*

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the Commissioners stated that they had had interviews with various persons who had discussed the subjects into which they had to inquire.

The matters referred to were considered in the following order:—(a) The constitution of the Irish Executive in so far as it is concerned with the maintenance of law and order; (b) the legal power vested in that Executive and (c) the history of events leading up to the outbreak of the 24th April, 1916, together with the Commission's observations and conclusions thereon.

### *The Irish Government.*

The report then proceeds as follows:—

The executive government of Ireland is entrusted to three officers—namely, the Lord Lieutenant, the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and the Under-Secretary; and for the purpose of maintaining order they have at their disposal two police forces—namely, the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Dublin Metropolitan Police Force. "Theoretically," says Sir William Anson, "the executive government of Ireland is conducted by the Lord



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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Lieutenant in Council, subject to instructions which he may receive from the Home Office of the United Kingdom. Practically it is conducted for all important purposes by the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant." (Law and Customs of the Constitution, ed. 1892, p. 189.)

The Lord Lieutenant (who is also Governor-General) is resident of Ireland. By the terms of his patent he is responsible for the civil government of the country, and the naval and military forces of the Crown in Ireland are under his orders. But, when the Chief Secretary is in the Cabinet and the Lord Lieutenant is not, all powers and responsibility are in practice vested in the Chief Secretary. His policy is the policy of the British Government as a whole, and it is obviously impossible that there should be any other independent authority or responsibility in Ireland. For many years past the office of Lord Lieutenant has been a ceremonial office; apart from the exercise of the prerogative of mercy he has no executive functions. Proclamations, appointments, and other State documents are issued in his name, but they are put before him for signature, without previous consultation. He

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*Report of the Royal Commission*

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is only furnished with information as to the state of the country which he nominally governs, when he asks for it, and then as a matter of courtesy. The military and naval forces in Ireland take their orders from the War Office and Admiralty respectively.

The office of Chief Secretary is a political office, changing with the Government. The executive government of Ireland is entirely in his hands, subject to the control of the Cabinet. When the Chief Secretary is a member of the Cabinet, as has been the case in recent years, he is, of necessity, to a great extent an absentee from Ireland. He has to attend Cabinet meetings,<sup>1</sup> and he is the only person who can, with authority, answer questions and defend the Government policy in the House of Commons. Although the Chief Secretary is in the position of a Secretary of State, he has no Parliamentary Under-Secretary, and the Irish law officers are frequently not members

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Birrell, a fair-minded and witty scholar, did his best to overcome the stupidity and anomaly of his office. In giving evidence before the Royal Commission he declared that a jackdaw or a magpie crying "Ireland, Ireland" would have received as much attention from the Cabinet as he did.—Editor.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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of the House of Commons. During the last two-and-a-half years of Mr. Birrell's nine years' tenure of office, Parliament has been in almost continuous session. He had, therefore, during this critical period but little opportunity of making himself personally acquainted with the state of affairs in Ireland. He was dependent for information on the reports of his Under-Secretary and the advice given by those Irish members of Parliament whom he chose to consult.

The Under-Secretary is a civil servant, residing in Ireland. For practical purposes he can only take action under authority delegated to him by the Chief Secretary. His duty is to report fully and fairly to his Chief all information that he can obtain, to give his advice freely as to what should be done, and then loyally to carry out the instructions of his Chief without regard to any personal opinion of his own.

For the ordinary maintenance of law and order the Irish Government<sup>1</sup> have two police forces—viz., the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Dublin Metropolitan Police Force. Both

<sup>1</sup> "The British Government in Ireland" would, of course, be a more correct title.—Editor.



**"KELLY'S FORT"**



**JACOB'S FACTORY**

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### *Report of the Royal Commission*

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forces are under the direct control of the Irish Government, though a rate is levied in Dublin as a contribution to the expenses of the Dublin force (see 12 and 13 Vict. c. 91, ss. 29, 30). It appears that since 1905 the Dublin Corporation have refused to pay the proceeds of this rate into the police fund, and that the matter has been adjusted by deducting the amount from the local taxation account. The Royal Irish Constabulary is a quasi-military force. Its members are armed with carbines and taught to shoot. They police the whole of Ireland, except the Dublin police district. When the rebellion broke out the Constabulary was somewhat under strength, as it had furnished a good many recruits to the Army. The military authorities were naturally anxious to get recruits from a body of men with splendid physique and a fine record of honourable service. The Dublin police is also a fine body of men and its numbers were also slightly diminished by reason of enlistments. The force is unarmed, consequently when an armed rebellion broke out in Dublin the police had to be withdrawn from duty. If Dublin, like Cork and Belfast, had been policed by the Royal Irish Constabulary, a thousand

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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armed and disciplined policemen, knowing every nook and cranny of the city, would have been a formidable addition to the thousand soldiers who were available when the rebellion first broke out, and the rebels might have hesitated to face them. As Sir Matthew Nathan expressed it in his letter of the 18th December, 1915, to Mr. Birrell, in the event of an outbreak. "Each policeman would be worth three soldiers." It is clear from the evidence that the two police forces work cordially together, but it is obvious that two separate forces, under separate commands, cannot be in a time of emergency as efficient as a single force under one command. Each of the forces has a small special Crimes Branch, drawn from uniformed men. For ordinary police purposes this branch does its work well, but it is not specially qualified to deal with political crime, which takes no notice of the boundaries of police districts, and which in the case of Ireland assumes an international complexion.

**If the Irish system of government be regarded as a whole it is anomalous in quiet times, and unworkable in times of crisis.**

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## *Report of the Royal Commission*

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### *Legal Powers of the Irish Executive*

The legal powers vested in the Irish Government for the maintenance of law and order, and the suppression of sedition must now be considered.

From 1881 to 1906 the Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 44 and 45 Vict. c. 5 (commonly known as the Arms Act), was in force in that country. Under that enactment the Government had complete control over the importation and sale of arms and ammunition, and over the carrying of arms or the possession of ammunition. The Act was a temporary one continued from year to year by the Expiring Laws Continuance Act. In 1906 the Act was allowed to lapse by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's Government. But the Irish Government had other, though less efficient, powers for dealing with unauthorised bodies who sought to arm themselves. If the ordinary excise duty on carrying a gun had been enforced a complete register of firearms would have been obtained, and the poorer members of the community might have found difficulty in paying the license duty (see the Gun Licence Act, 1870, 33 and 34 Vict. c.



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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57). It seems that no attempt was made to enforce this law, the only reason alleged being that the people concerned would have refused to take out the licence and pay the duty.

The Explosive Substances Act, 1883 (46 and 47 Vict. c. 83), which applies to the whole of the United Kingdom, gives drastic powers for dealing with explosives, and it may be assumed that the term "explosive" would include stores of ammunition as well as high explosives. Under that Act if any person has in his possession any explosive substance he is guilty of felony and liable on conviction to 14 years' penal servitude, unless he can show that he was in possession thereof for a lawful object (sec. 4). Accessories are liable to a like punishment. For the purpose of discovering stores of explosives, the Attorney-General, if he has reasonable ground for believing that the Act has been disobeyed, may order an inquiry at which witnesses may be examined on oath, although no person is charged with any crime under the Act.

The Unlawful Drilling Act, 1819 (60 Geo. 3, c. 1), is an Act "to prevent the training of persons to the use of arms, and to the prac-

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### *Report of the Royal Commission*

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tice of military evolutions and exercise." It prohibits drilling and military exercises unless authorised by the Crown, the lieutenant, or two county justices, and authorises any justice or peace officer to disperse any meeting unauthorised for drilling, and to arrest the persons attending it. As regards procedure, the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887 (50 and 51 Vict. c. 20), besides providing for special jury trials in proclaimed districts, empowers the Lord Lieutenant by proclamation to prohibit or suppress "dangerous associations," and defines as dangerous any association which (*inter alia*) interferes with the administration of the law or disturbs the maintenance of law and order.

It may be noted too that the old Acts, known as the Whiteboy Acts, some of which were passed by the Irish Parliament, appear to be still in force. These Acts give the Government extensive powers for dealing with riotous or unlawful assemblies.

The Irish Government have also the ordinary common law powers for proceeding against persons who publish seditious libels or engage in seditious conspiracies. But legal powers are of no avail unless the Government

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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make up their minds to put them into execution, and can rely on juries and magistrates to do their duty when prosecutions are supported by adequate evidence.

War broke out on the 4th August, 1914, and on the 8th August the Defence of the Realm Act, 1914 (4 and 5 Geo. V., c. 29), was passed. This Act authorised His Majesty in Council to issue Regulations, during the continuance of the war, "for securing the public safety and the defence of the realm," and instituted trial by courtmartial for serious offences against the Regulations. Under these provisions there appeared to be ample powers for dealing with any manifestations of sedition or rebellion. But as regards Ireland, the teeth of this enactment were drawn by the Defence of the Realm Amendment Act, 1915 (5 Geo. V., c. 34), which was passed on the 18th March, 1915. That Act provided that any British subject (not being a person subject to military law) charged with an offence under the Defence of the Realm Acts might claim to be tried by a jury in a civil court, instead of by courtmartial. Power was given to His Majesty to suspend the operation of this provision "in the event of invasion or other special mili-

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### *Report of the Royal Commission*

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tary emergency." But it certainly would have been difficult to have justified the exercise of this suspensory power in Ireland before any actual outbreak in arms had occurred. It was impossible, as stated by Mr. Birrell and other witnesses, to get a conviction, in any case tried by a jury, for an offence against law and order, however strong the evidence for the Crown might be. The power of internment conferred by the Regulations applied primarily to foreigners, and only extended to British subjects when "hostile association" could be established. Therefore, however serious an offence might be, the only remedy was a prosecution before a court of summary jurisdiction, where six months' imprisonment was the maximum punishment that could be imposed, and when a case was tried before justices there was no certainty that the decision would be in accordance with the evidence.

### *Causes of the Outbreak*

Under this head the Commissioners stated that the fact should be borne in mind that there was always a section of opinion in Ireland bitterly opposed to the British connec-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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tion, and that in times of excitement this section could impose its sentiments on largely increased numbers of the people. As Mr. Birrell described it—"The spirit of what to-day is called *Sinn Féinism* is mainly composed of the old hatred and distrust of the British connection, always noticeable in all classes, and in all places, varying in degree, and finding different ways of expression, but always there as the background of Irish politics and character."

The incidents which preceded the rising were summarised from the growth of the Citizen Army during the Dublin strikes of 1913, and the arming of carters by employers to resist the armed strikers, and it was pointed out that this lawless display of force should have been a warning against permitting the indiscriminate arming of civilians in times of turbulence and faction. Reference was then made to the landing of arms in Ulster from foreign countries during 1913 and the issue of the proclamation prohibiting the importation of arms. Then came the Larne gun-running by the Orangemen, in defiance of the proclamation in April, 1914, and the sub-

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sequent withdrawal of the proclamation in face of a judgment of an Irish Court upholding it. The Howth gun-running on 26th July, 1914; the action of Mr. W. V. Harrel, Assistant Commissioner D.M.P.; the Bachelor's Walk incident, the censuring of Mr Harrel, his resignation and that of Sir John Ross of Bladensburg, Chief Commissioner of Dublin Metropolitan Police, were touched upon, and it was pointed out that Mr. Harrel's dismissal tended to weaken the authority of the police, as it gave rise to the opinion amongst the ignorant classes that in any case of disorder the Government might not support their action. In spite of the breach of the proclamation in the landing of arms at Howth, the Irish Government decided, as in the landing of arms at Larne, to take no action, and on 5th August the restriction on the importation of arms was removed.

The report then continued:

#### *Communication With Germany.*

From the evidence given before the Royal Commission it is clear that the insurrection

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### ***The Irish Rebellion***

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was caused by two bodies of men allied together for this purpose, and known as the Irish Volunteers and the Citizen Army. It is now a matter of common notoriety that the Irish Volunteers have been in communication with the authorities in Germany, and were for a long time known to be supplied with money through Irish-American societies. This was so stated in public by Mr. John McNeill (*sic*) on the 8th November, 1914. It was suspected long before the outbreak that some of the money came from German sources.

The following facts show what was known of the origin and development of these two bodies, and the action taken by the Irish Government in dealing with their activities:

The Irish National Volunteers owed their origin to a meeting at Dublin in November, 1913, of twelve men who came together to discuss the formation of an Irish Volunteer Army. The founders of the force included John McNeill, Bulmer Hobson, P. H. Pearse, and The O'Rahilly. After the decision to enrol volunteers had been taken, a meeting attended by some thousands of people was held in Dublin, and the movement took shape.

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("Secret History of the Irish Volunteers," by The O'Rahilly.) It was started quite independently of any Irish political party by men strongly opposed to any political connection of Ireland with England. By June, 1914, 65,000 men were reported to have been enrolled, and Mr. Redmond in that month succeeded in securing the addition of enough members to the Committee to secure to himself and his party the control of the movements of the body, to the great dissatisfaction of the original founders. On the eve of the Prime Minister's meeting in Dublin on the 25th September, 1914—where Mr. Redmond spoke strongly in favour of recruiting—a manifesto was issued attacking Mr. Redmond's attitude. This was signed by McNeill and six others (afterwards involved in the rebellion), and concluded by regretting that Sir Roger Casement's absence prevented his being a signatory. On September 30th this party dissociated themselves from the Irish National Volunteers, and formed a new force under the name of the Irish Volunteers. By the end of October the force enrolled numbered over 13,000, including 2,000 in Dublin. Of these more than 8,000 were known to be actively



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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engaged in drilling at the end of 1914, and to be in possession of over 1,400 rifles.

It was of paramount importance that, after the outbreak of the present war, no opportunity should have been given for the drilling and arming of any body of men known to be of seditious tendency, and no other consideration should have interfered with the enforcing of this duty. After the war broke out there was a considerable wave of feeling in Ireland in favour of the Allies. Reservists joining the Colours were greeted with enthusiasm, and recruiting was successful. It was owing to the activities of the leaders of the *Sinn Fein* movement that the forces of disloyalty gradually and steadily increased, and undermined the initial sentiment of patriotism.

The words "*Sinn Fein*" (ourselves alone) rather describe a movement than an association, and the principal efforts of those connected with the movement before the outbreak of the war had been active opposition to any recruiting of Irishmen for the British Army and Navy, and a passive opposition to all Irish Parliamentary parties. From the fact that some leaders of the *Sinn Fein* movement also led the Irish Volunteers, the latter



**LIBERTY HALL BEFORE AND AFTER THE REBELLION**

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have frequently been called the *Sinn Fein* Volunteers, and the two expressions from the end of 1914 are synonymous. Between the 5th August, 1914, and the 5th December, 1914, there was no law in force prohibiting the importation of arms into Ireland. Certain warrants had been issued by the Lord Lieutenant, authorising the police to seize arms, but on the 5th December an amendment of the regulations under the Defence of the Realm Act empowered the police to seize arms and explosives which might be landed on the coast, an exception being made in favour of sporting shot guns, which was, however, cancelled on the 5th February, 1915. Nevertheless, arms and explosives continued to be smuggled into Ireland. A flood of seditious literature was disseminated by the leaders of the Irish Volunteer Party early in the war, and certain newspapers were suppressed, but according to the statement of the Under-Secretary for Ireland, action against the seditious Press was not very consistently taken, and prominent members of the Irish Parliamentary Party were strongly against newspaper suppression.

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## *The Irish Rebellion*

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### *Lack of Attention in Parliament*

By the end of March, 1915, the Irish Volunteers do not appear to have increased much in numbers, although they had acquired more arms. On March 16th, 1915, the Defence of the Realm Act, No. 2, was passed, by which any British subject could claim the right to trial by jury for an offence against the Defence of the Realm regulations, and this Act, to a great extent, hampered the Irish Executive in dealing with cases of sedition in Ireland. Insufficient attention appears to have been paid to the state of affairs in Ireland in both Houses of Parliament.

Throughout the whole of the remainder of the year 1915 the Irish Volunteer Party were active in their efforts to encourage sedition. Seditious papers were published, pamphlets of a violent tone issued and circulated, paid organisers were sent throughout the country to enrol and drill volunteer recruits, and the leaders themselves were active in attending anti-recruiting meetings at which disloyal speeches were openly made. A considerable number of the younger members of the priesthood in certain districts joined in the move-

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### *Report of the Royal Commission*

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ment, and schoolmasters who were followers of the *Sinn Féin* movement disseminated treason amongst the younger people through the medium of the Irish language.

Action was taken during this period against seditious newspapers, and against certain paid organisers of the Irish Volunteer Party, but this course was strongly opposed by members of the Irish Parliamentary Party and the Nationalist Press. Major Price, in his evidence, says:—"One unfortunate thing which hindered us a good deal was the attitude of the official Nationalist Party and their Press. Whenever General Friend did anything strong in the way of suppressing or deporting these men (the organisers) from Ireland, they at once deprecated it, and said it was a monstrous thing to turn a man out of Ireland."

Irishmen, no doubt, appreciate the maintenance of order, but they appear to have an inveterate prejudice against the punishment of disorder.

So seditious had the country become during 1915 that juries in Dublin, and magistrates in various parts of the country—through fear or favour—could not be trusted to give deci-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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sions in accordance with the evidence. The only tribunals which could be relied upon at this time were those presided over by resident magistrates in Dublin or Belfast, who had no power to impose a greater sentence than six months' hard labour.

### *Effect of Compulsory Service*

The question of the application of compulsory service gave a great stimulus to the Irish Volunteer movement in the autumn of 1915, and shortly before the recent outbreak the number of Irish Volunteers was estimated by the police authorities to be about 15,000, armed with over 1,800 rifles, and about the same number of shot guns and pistols.

During the greater part of this period the Citizen Army remained distinct from the Irish Volunteers. The movement which led to the formation of the former body, composed chiefly of Dublin workmen, was to a large extent inspired by anarchist sentiment based on Irish discontent. The leader was James Connolly, who is described as a man of great energy and ability. By the month of November, 1915, it was known that the

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### *Report of the Royal Commission*

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two bodies were acting in combination in Dublin.

In the newspaper, *The Worker's Republic*, edited by James Connolly, the following passage occurs:—

“The Irish Citizen Army was the first publicly organized armed citizen force south of the Boyne. Its constitution pledged and still pledges its members to work for an Irish Republic and for the emancipation of labour.”

Throughout the whole of this year Ireland was in a state of great prosperity,<sup>1</sup> so that Irish discontent could hardly be attributed to economic conditions, except that the housing conditions of the working classes in the City of Dublin might have accounted for an underlying sense of dissatisfaction with existing authority.

In the meantime the Volunteers were steadily drilled and practised military manœuvres by day and night. Ambulance classes were formed in imitation of a similar organi-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Colum says that fear of a famine was one of the causes which precipitated rebellion. The prosperity the Commission speaks of was of the ephemeral kind caused elsewhere also by the War.—Editor.



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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sation in Ulster formed by the Ulster Volunteers. In Dublin the Irish Volunteers held officers' training schools and carried out night attacks, and some manœuvres took place in the middle of the city and in the neighbourhood of the Castle.

During this period the National or Redmondite Volunteers had sunk into almost complete stagnation, and towards the close of the year 1915 the largest armed and drilled force in the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught—excluding soldiers were the Irish Volunteers.

### *An Intercepted Letter*

In a letter intercepted by the Censor in the post on the 24th March, 1916, and believed to have been written by one of the teaching staff of St. Mary's College, Rathmines, to a friend in America, the following extract appears, and is of interest as an indication of the spirit that was abroad in disloyal sections of the community:—

“On St. Patrick's Day there was a lot of people put into prison under the Defence of the Realm Act.

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There was a rumour that they intended to seize the arms of the Volunteers. The police raided a lot of places, but only got one fire-arm in a house, and gave up the job. The Castle is watching them closely, but is afraid to do anything against them. There was a march in the streets of Dublin, right through the city, in front of the foreign College of Trinity and before the Parliament House. The Volunteers were all armed with rifles. Eoin MacNeill was present, and they saluted him as they marched by, and all this under the nose of the Castle. It is a dangerous thing to do, but the Volunteers do not care. They are getting stronger every day. Many efforts are being made, for it is known now that they are our only hope, since they put conscription down some time ago. Redmond is done for. Whoever wins the war, this country will be wronged and plundered, but the people of Ireland are not disposed of yet. Their spirit is always improving and growing more Irish. One thing is clear, if not others. An end is being put to the rule and insolence of the 'Peeler.'<sup>1</sup> They are not nearly so arrogant as they used to be. I hope to God we may see you in Ireland when you have finished your time over there. We want the like of you to strike a blow at John Bull. Easter will soon be over; then there will be the summer coming on. May and June will pass by—not very hot as yet—and then — you know as well as I do, and no doubt much better."

<sup>1</sup> Because the force was created by Sir Robert Peel. the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary are known by this nickname.—Editor.

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## *The Irish Rebellion*

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### *Confidential Police Reports*

Before turning to the events of the present year it is desirable to refer to the confidential reports of the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary and of the Chief Commissioner of the Dublin Metropolitan Police, to show that even before the outbreak of war, and during the war, full knowledge of the existing state of affairs was supplied to the Under-Secretary, and through him to the Chief Secretary. On the 15th June, 1914, a report was submitted from the office of the Inspector-General, in which it was stated:—

“In Ireland the training and drilling to the use of arms of a great part of the male population is a new departure which is bound in the not far distant future to alter all the existing conditions of life. Obedience to the law has never been a prominent characteristic of the people. In times of passion or excitement the law has only been maintained by force, and this has been rendered practicable owing to the want of cohesion among the crowds hostile to the police. If the people became armed and drilled, effective police control will vanish. Events are moving. Each county will soon have a trained army far outnumbering the police, and those who control the volunteers will be in a position to dictate to what extent the law of the land may be carried into effect.”

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As early as the 7th September, 1914, the Dublin Metropolitan Police were warning the Government of the danger to be expected within Dublin itself. On that date the following statement was made to the Government:—

“There is no doubt that so far as Dublin is concerned the majority of the Irish National Volunteers would follow the lead of the extreme section, and hints have been given that they are not without hope of being able to assume and establish control of the Government of Ireland before the present difficulties are over, and that they may attempt some escapade before long.”

On the 26th October, 1914, the Detective Department of the Dublin Metropolitan Police submitted to the Under-Secretary notes of the speeches made by the Irish Volunteers at their first annual Convention. The demonstrators had marched to the meeting nearly 1,000 strong, 230 of their number armed with rifles, and 20 of the National Boy Scouts, similarly equipped. Speeches of the most inflammatory and revolutionary character were delivered. The leaders predicted rebellion and the shedding of blood “in the great fight of Ireland against the British Empire.”

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These documents were seen by the Chief Secretary, but he wrote no comment on their contents, and no proceedings were taken.

From the commencement the Dublin Metropolitan Police were in all respects as diligent as the Royal Irish Constabulary in forwarding to the Government regular information as to the conduct and progress of the hostile organisations within their jurisdiction.

In the annual report of the Inspector-General, delivered at the end of the year 1914, the following words occur:—"In the *personnel* of the Committee, in its declaration of policy, in the utterances of its leading representatives in the Press, and at public meetings, in its opposition to the efforts of Mr. Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party to bring Ireland into line at the present national crisis, and in its crusade against enlistment in the Army, the Irish Volunteer organisation has shown itself to be disloyal, seditious, and revolutionary, if the means and opportunity were at hand."

On the 12th February, 1915, a further report was submitted, in which it was stated that at certain meetings of the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Tyrone members were re-

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mind of the opportunity afforded by the present crisis to strike a blow for the independence of Ireland, and they were promised arms and ammunition when the time arrived.

At certain places in County Wexford, after the promulgation of military orders under the Defence of the Realm Act for the action of the inhabitants in the event of an invasion, counter-notices were placarded calling on the people to disobey the orders issued, and to welcome the German troops as friends.

### *Money from America*

In a report submitted on the 13th July, 1915, it was stated that information had been received from a reliable source that a sum of 3,000 dollars had been recently sent from America to the Council of the Irish Volunteers.

In a report submitted on the 14th September, 1915, the following passage occurs:—

“According to the information confidentially obtained, communications are passing between the leaders of the Clan-na-Gael in America and the *Sinn Fein* in Ireland, and money has been sent over to the latter to help them in a campaign of disloyalty. As the leaders of the Irish Volunteers apparently aim at national in-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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dependence, the force bears resemblance to the old Fenian movement, but, unlike the latter, is ready to drill and arm its members, and is not regarded as a secret society. As already reported, according to the confidential information, at a meeting of the Council of Irish Volunteers held in Dublin on the 30th of May, 1915, Professor McNeill in the chair, a resolution in favour of the Irish Volunteers declaring themselves in favour of immediate insurrection, proposed by Bulmer Hobson, was only defeated by the casting vote of Professor McNeill."

A report dated the 13th November, 1915, contained the following statement:—

"This force is disloyal and bitterly anti-British, and is daily improving its organisation. Some drill is practised, but its activities are mainly directed to promoting sedition and hindering recruitment for the Army, and it is now pledged to resist conscription with arms. According to information from a reliable source, the *Sinn Feiners* have already planned a rising in the event of conscription, and, as this is, perhaps, the one object in which they would find many Redmondites in agreement with them, they might give a serious amount of trouble."

On the 14th December, 1915, a report was submitted that:—

"The Irish Volunteers were very active during the month, and gained 1,300 new members. Lieutenant

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O'Leary, V.C., was hooted and insulted by a party of Volunteers route marching. A party of 800 held military manoeuvres at Artane, County Dublin. The liberty of action at present enjoyed by the openly disloyal and hostile *Sinn Feiners* is having a very undesirable effect."

On the 29th November, 1915, a special report was delivered which deserves study. It contains the following statement:—

"It is a fact that this body of Irish Volunteers numbers 10,000 strong in the provinces, with control of 1,500 rifles, and possibly more, thoroughly disloyal and hostile to British Government, is apparently now on the increase, and I desire to point out that it might rapidly assume dimensions sufficient to cause anxiety to the military authorities. As it is, in the event of an invasion, or of any important reverse to our troops in the field, the Irish Volunteer Force would seriously embarrass arrangements for home defence."

### *Lord Midleton and Mr. Birrell*

In addition to the information contained in the above-mentioned reports of the Royal Irish Constabulary, Lord Midleton, in November, 1915, had an interview with the Chief Secretary, in which he strongly urged that the Irish Volunteers should be disarmed, and



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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not permitted to parade, and he pressed for the prosecution of those responsible for seditious speeches. His warnings were entirely neglected.

On the 18th December, 1915, a letter was sent by the Under-Secretary to the Chief Secretary, of which the following passage is an extract:—

“What is Redmond up to, with his comparisons between Ireland and Great Britain in the matters of police and crime? He knows, or should know, after what Dillon wrote to him over a month ago in the enclosed ‘confidential’ letter, and repeated verbally on the 3rd inst. The present situation in Ireland is most serious and menacing. Redmond himself sent me the other ‘private’ enclosure on the 9th. He knows, or should know, that the enrolled strength of the *Sinn Féin* Volunteers has increased by a couple of thousand active members in the last two months to a total of some 13,500, and each group of these is a centre of revolutionary propaganda. He knows, or should know, that efforts are being made to get arms for the support of this propaganda—that the Irish Volunteers have already some 2,500 rifles, and that they have their eyes on the 10,000 in the hands of the supine National Volunteers, and that they are endeavouring to supplement their rifles with shot guns, revolvers, and pistols. New measures, possibly requiring additional police at the ports, will be required to counter these attempts, and unless in other matters we keep these revolutionaries

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under observation, we shall not be in a position to deal with the outbreak, which we hope will not occur, but which undoubtedly will follow any attempt to enforce conscription, or, even if there is no such attempt, might take place as a result of continual unsuccess of the British Arms."

On the 8th January, 1915, Lord Midleton called attention in the House of Lords to the condition of Ireland. In the course of his evidence he said: "I also named four seditious newspapers, and pressed the Government to oppose them, and to say exactly what was the status of the Irish Volunteers. Lord Crewe's reply, which I hand in, minimised the increase of the organization, expressed sanguine hopes that regulations issued by the military authorities would practically put a stop to this dissemination of seditious newspapers, and undertook, under renewed pressure from me, that the full attention of the Irish Government and the military authorities would be given to the status of the Volunteers." Lord Midleton further said: "On the 26th January, 1916, I had an interview with the Prime Minister by appointment, and I brought all these facts before him. The Prime Minister asked me to hand him a

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memorandum giving the views which had been placed in my hands, into which he undertook to make most careful examination. I sent him subsequently at his wish a memorandum, which I produce." He added: "I had an appointment with the Prime Minister for the 14th March on another very important subject, and I proposed then to lay before him the Report of this Committee" (which had met to discuss this subject) "and to give him a copy of it. Unfortunately the Prime Minister was taken ill on the 13th, and subsequently had to go to Rome. In the result the interview never took place."

Besides the warning above mentioned Lord Midleton gave further warnings at later periods. In his evidence he stated that on February 28th he saw Sir Matthew Nathan, and on March 6th Lord Wimborne, and that:

"All the questions which had been discussed before were brought up at this meeting, and Sir Matthew Nathan especially pressed on me that since our previous interview the movement had been developing much more seriously in Dublin. He mentioned to me the names of those who were known to the Government as the chief conspirators, and urged me to read as a specimen an article by Sheehy Skeffington in the January or February number of the *Century*. I felt so

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strongly that Sir Matthew had not the necessary powers that I asked the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether I could go over and see him, and as he was in London he was good enough to arrange a meeting with me on March 6th in Arlington street. I found Lord Wimborne took rather a more favourable view of the position in Ireland than Sir Matthew Nathan . . . but the general trend of the conversation showed that he was most anxious to deal with some of the ringleaders, and I gathered, although he did not say so in words, he was unable to move further owing to the general attitude of the Government towards Ireland which it was impossible to disturb."

### *Procuring Arms and High Explosives*

Between January, 1916, and the outbreak of the insurrection, the Irish Volunteers steadily increased in numbers and discipline. During this time they were known to be supplying themselves with quantities of arms and high explosives by theft, or otherwise, when opportunity offered. In the early months of the year the state of various parts of the country was known to be lawless. In January the heads of the Royal Irish Constabulary submitted to the Under Secretary suggestions for the amendment of the Defence of the Realm Act and Regulations.

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They pointed out that trial by jury had proved to be a failure, and that in many parts of Ireland the magistrates could not be relied upon to enforce the existing regulations. A conference was held at the Castle to consider these recommendations early in February. Amendments of the law and prohibition of the carrying of arms by the Irish Volunteers were suggested as remedial measures in a carefully written paper of recommendations submitted to the conference. It was attended by Mr. O'Connell, Deputy Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Under Secretary, General Friend, and the Solicitor-General. The only suggestion discussed was that dealing with explosives—the more serious matters were not even brought forward. Upon this point Mr. O'Connell remarked: "It was my impression, rightly or wrongly, that they had been discussed by higher authorities."

The publication of newspapers containing seditious articles continued during the spring of 1916. A number of seditious books called "Tracts for the Times" were circulated. Major Price, of the Army Intelligence Department, informed the Commission that he

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had consultations with regard to this matter, but added:—"I liken myself to John the Baptist preaching in the Wilderness as to taking steps on the subject. The civil authorities did not think it desirable to take steps."

### *"A Pack of Rebels"*

On St. Patrick's Day, the 17th March, there was a parade of the Irish Volunteers throughout the provinces, under orders from their headquarters. About 4,500 turned out, of whom 1,817 were armed. The report of the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary, dealing with this parade, contained the following remark:—

"There can be no doubt that the Irish Volunteer leaders are a pack of rebels who would proclaim their independence in the event of any favourable opportunity, but with their present resources and without substantial reinforcements it is difficult to imagine that they will make even a brief stand against a small body of troops. These observations, however, are made with reference to the provinces, and not to the Dublin Metropolitan area, which is the centre of the movement."

At the end of last March the Council of the Irish Volunteers assembled in Dublin, and

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issued a manifesto warning the public that the Volunteers:—

“Cannot submit to be disarmed, and that the raiding for arms and the attempted disarming of men, therefore, in the natural course of things can only be met by resistance and bloodshed.”

On the 7th April, 1916, public meetings of the Irish Volunteers were held for the purposes of protesting against the deportation orders and to enlist recruits. The speeches were very violent, threats being used that persons attempting to disarm the Volunteers would be “shot dead.”

### *The Chief Commissioner's View*

The Chief Commissioner made a report to the Under-Secretary, and that document shows clearly the view that Colonel Edgeworth-Johnstone took of the situation:—

“These recruiting meetings are a very undesirable development, and are, I think, causing both annoyance and uneasiness amongst loyal citizens. . . . The *Sinn Féin* Party are gaining in numbers, in equipment, in discipline, and in confidence, and I think drastic action should be taken to limit their activities. The longer this is postponed the more difficult it will be to carry out.”

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This report reached the Under-Secretary on the 10th April, who wrote on it: "Chief Secretary and the Lord Lieutenant to see the Chief Commissioner's minute." On the 12th the Chief Secretary wrote upon it: "Requires careful consideration. Is it thought practicable to undertake a policy of disarmament, and, if so, within what limits, if any, can such a policy be circumscribed?" Upon the same day the Lord Lieutenant wrote upon it: "This is a difficult point; could the disarming be satisfactorily effected?"

No answer to the minute was returned to the Royal Irish Constabulary, and the file did not find its way back to the Inspector-General until the 24th May.

For some months before the rising, a newspaper campaign was carried on suggesting that if an attempt were made by the Government to disarm the Irish Volunteers, it could only arise from the deliberate intention of Englishmen to provoke disorder and bloodshed.

There is no doubt that these articles were intended to intimidate the Irish Government, and to prevent their taking active repressive measures.



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### *The Arms Ship and the Circular*

The report then tells how on April 18, 1916, news reached Dublin Castle that a ship with arms had left Germany for Ireland, and that a rising was timed for Easter Eve. It also tells of Alderman Thomas Kelly's reading of the circular at the meeting of the Dublin Corporation on April 19th.<sup>1</sup>

The report proceeds:

This document was an entire fabrication, and it has since been shown that it was printed at Liberty Hall, the headquarters of the Citizen Army. Many copies were printed, distributed, and believed to be genuine, and they, no doubt, led to the belief by the Irish Volunteers and the Citizen Army that they would shortly be disarmed. This, undoubtedly became one of the proximate causes of the outbreak.

On April 22, 1916, the day of the capture of the German arms ship and the arrest of Sir Roger Casement, the *Irish Volunteer* announced, under the title of Headquarters' Bulletin:—

<sup>1</sup> See page 78.—Editor.

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"Arrangements are now nearing completion in all the more important brigade areas for the holding of a very interesting series of manœuvres at Easter. In some instances the arrangements contemplate a one- or two-day bivouac. As for Easter, the Dublin programme may well stand as a model for other areas."

Reference was also made to a more elaborate series of manœuvres at Whitsuntide.

It is argued that the leaders of the movement expected the arrival of the ship, since emissaries of the Irish Volunteers were sent to meet it. Both the vessel and Sir Roger Casement, however, appeared sooner than was expected. On the news of the capture of the ship orders were given at the Irish Volunteer headquarters cancelling throughout Ireland the orders for the following day (Easter Sunday). The order, signed "McNeill, Chief of Staff," appeared in the early evening papers of Saturday, 22nd April. On that evening the authorities (at Dublin Castle) knew that Sir Roger Casement had been arrested. A conference took place at the Castle, and the abandonment of the Volunteer parade was known. Reference is made to the robbery under arms of 250 pounds of gelignite from quarries near Dublin, to the Sunday confer-

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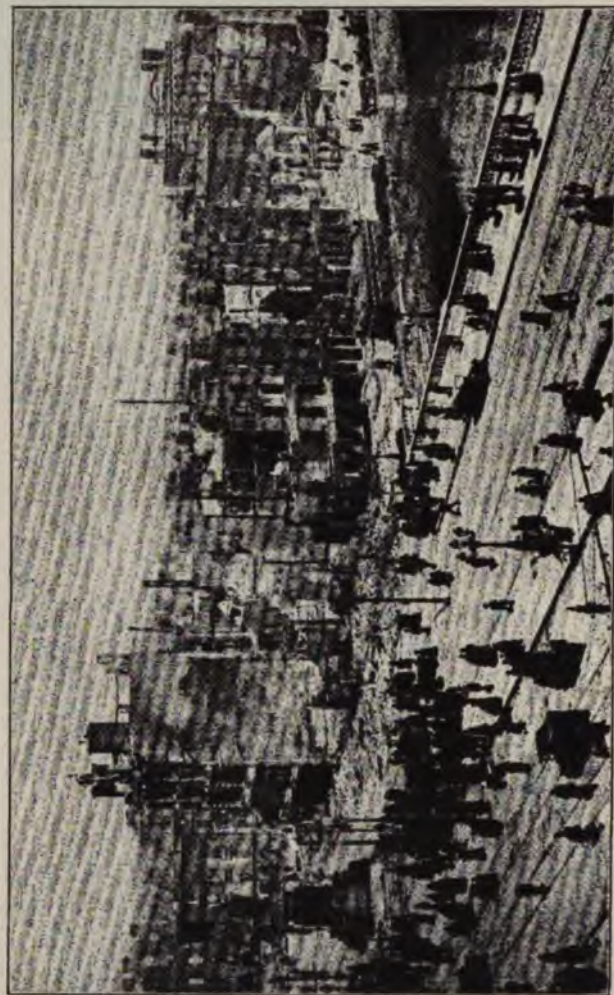
ences at the Castle, when it was decided to arrest the leaders of the movement, subject to sufficient military preparation to overawe armed opposition. On the morning of 24th April the Chief Secretary's concurrence with the proposed arrest and internment in England of the hostile leaders was obtained, but before any effective steps could be taken the insurrection had broken out, and by noon many portions of the City of Dublin had been simultaneously occupied by rebellious armed forces. "There is no doubt that the outbreak had been carefully planned beforehand. A pocketbook discovered upon one of the rebels who took part in the rising in Wexford contained a list of the places actually seized in Dublin when the outbreak occurred."

### *Conclusions*

The following are the conclusions arrived at by the Commission:—

It is outside the scope of Your Majesty's instructions to us to enquire how far the policy of the Irish Executive was adopted by the Cabinet as a whole, or to attach responsibility to any but the civil and military executive in





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### ***Report of the Royal Commission***

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Ireland; but the general conclusion that we draw from the evidence before us is that the main cause of the rebellion appears to be that lawlessness was allowed to grow up unchecked, and that Ireland for several years has been administered on the principle that it was safer and more expedient to leave law in abeyance if collision with any faction of the Irish people could thereby be avoided.

Such a policy is the negation of that cardinal rule of government which demands that the enforcement of law and the preservation of order should always be independent of political expediency.

We consider that the importation of large quantities of arms into Ireland after the lapse of the Arms Act, and the toleration of drilling by large bodies of men first in Ulster, and then in other districts of Ireland, created conditions which rendered possible the recent troubles in Dublin and elsewhere.

It appears to us that reluctance was shown by the Irish Government to repress by prosecution written and spoken seditious utterances, and to suppress the drilling and manœuvring of armed forces known to be under the control of men who were openly

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declaring their hostility to Your Majesty's Government and their readiness to welcome and assist Your Majesty's enemies.

This reluctance was largely prompted by the pressure brought to bear by the Parliamentary representatives of the Irish people, and in Ireland itself there developed a widespread belief that no repressive measures would be undertaken by the Government against sedition. This led to a rapid increase of preparations for insurrection, and was the immediate cause of the recent outbreak.

We are of opinion that from the commencement of the present war all seditious utterances and publications should have been firmly suppressed at the outset, and if juries or magistrates were found unwilling to enforce this policy further powers should have been invoked under the existing Acts for the Defence of the Realm.

We are also of opinion that on the outbreak of war all drilling and manœuvring by unrecognised bodies of men, whether armed or unarmed, should have been strictly prohibited, and that as soon as it became known to the Irish Government that the Irish Volunteers and the Citizen Army were under the control

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of men prepared to assist Your Majesty's enemies if the opportunity should be offered to them, all drilling and open carrying of arms by these bodies of men should have been forcibly suppressed.

It does not appear to be disputed that the authorities in the spring of 1916, while believing that the seditious bodies would not venture unaided to break into insurrection, were convinced that they were prepared to assist a German landing.

We are further of opinion that at the risk of a collision early steps should have been taken to arrest and prosecute leaders and organisers of sedition.

For the reasons before given, we do not think that any responsibility rests upon the Lord Lieutenant. He was appointed in February, 1915, and was in no way answerable for the policy of the Government.

We are, however, of the opinion that the Chief Secretary as the administrative head of Your Majesty's Government in Ireland is primarily responsible for the situation that was allowed to arise and the outbreak that occurred.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Birrell resigned office on the 3rd of May and



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Sir Matthew Nathan assumed office as Under-Secretary to the Irish Government in September, 1914, only. In our view he carried out with the utmost loyalty the policy of the Government, and of his immediate superior, the Chief Secretary, but we consider that he did not sufficiently impress upon the Chief Secretary during the latter's prolonged absences from Dublin the necessity for more active measures to remedy the situation in Ireland, which on December 18th last, in a letter to the Chief Secretary, he described as "most serious and menacing."

We are satisfied that Sir Neville Chamberlain, the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and Colonel Edgeworth-Johnstone, the Chief Commissioner of the Dublin Metropolitan Police, required their subordinates to furnish, and did receive from their subordinates, full and exact reports as to the nature, progress, and aims of the various armed associations in Ireland. From these sources the Government had abundant material on which they could have acted many Lord Wimborne on the 10th. The latter has since been reinstated.

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months before the leaders themselves contemplated any actual rising.

For the conduct, zeal, and loyalty of the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Dublin Metropolitan Police we have nothing but praise.

We do not attach any responsibility to the military authorities in Ireland for the rebellion or its results.<sup>1</sup> As long as Ireland was under civil government those authorities had nothing to do with the suppression of sedition. Their duties were confined to securing efficiency in their own ranks and to the promotion of recruiting, and they could only aid in the suppression of disorder when duly called on by the civil power. By the middle of 1915 it was obvious to the military authorities that their efforts in favour of recruiting were being frustrated by the hostile activities of the *Sinn Féin* supporters, and they made representations to the Government to that effect. The general danger of the situation was

<sup>1</sup> It is worth while noting that the Commission disregarded the "Curragh Camp Mutiny" in its findings. Yet to the ordinary mind that assertion of military arrogance would seem a very potent goad to rebellion.—Editor.

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clearly pointed out to the Irish Government by the military authorities, on their own initiative, in February last, but the warning fell on unheeding ears.

*Note by Editor:* The Report, somewhat abridged, is published here as an historical document. As a revelation of the anomaly and incapacity of British government in Ireland, it has some value. But it is vitiated by the same "inexorable legality" (to use Mr. W. D. Howells's fine phrase) that decreed the shooting of Pearse and the hanging of Casement. As an inquest on the psychology of Irish discontent it has the precise value of the verdict which a coroner's jury of Brixton tradesmen might be expected to pass on the death of Thomas Chatterton. As to facts it reveals nothing which might not have been learned from the ordinary man in the street in Dublin. Mr. Birrell would probably have paid more attention to the police if the latter were not incessantly crying "Wolf!" even in the most piping times of peace. By the way, it is worth noting that, excluding political offences, Ireland has repeatedly been shown to be "the most crimeless country in Europe." If we say that the English conscience is dominated by an inexorable legality and the Irish by an inexorable morality, we shall be as near the truth as anyone who seeks to indict or vindicate a nation in a phrase. But—"It's a long way to Tipperary" from London, and it is still longer when one makes the journey via India, as did the chairman of the Royal Commission.

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## CHAPTER XII

### SOME PREVIOUS REBELLIONS

"In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty; six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms."

*From the Proclamation of the Irish Republic.*

**T**HREE hundred years backward from 1916 would bring us to 1616, but it is not possible to find that Ireland had six concerted armed risings during that period. If we take a period of three hundred and fifty years, the statement is easily within the mark. Between 1560 and 1695, alone, there were four great rebellions, several smaller ones and, finally, the fight which the Irish waged, partly on behalf of the Stuarts and partly for Irish independence, against the Prince of Orange.

The rebellion of Shane O'Neill covered, with some interruptions, the period from

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1561 to 1567. "Shane the Proud," as he was called, was one of the ablest and most intrepid soldiers Ireland has produced, and until near the end of his career he was almost uniformly successful against his enemies. His death was ultimately encompassed by treachery.

The Geraldine rebellion of 1565 to 1583 was confined mainly to the South of Ireland, and was waged with varying success. It had some help from abroad, for in October, 1580, seven hundred Spaniards and Italians landed on the south coast. But like all other rebellions, its history, as one writer says, may be summed up as "rebellion, defeat, confiscation, plantation."

More formidable, and marked by real military success, was the rebellion of Hugh O'Neill which lasted from 1595 to 1598. O'Neill in 1595 captured Monaghan, and later defeated the English again at Clontibret. With the help of Red Hugh O'Donnell, he became the real master of Ulster. In 1597 he again defeated the English at Drumflugh, and later that year was fought the famous battle of the Yellow Ford. There O'Neill and O'Donnell defeated 4,000 Eng-

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lish foot and 500 horse under Bagenal, the conquered leaving over 2,000 dead on the field. In 1598 the rebellion spread to Munster and met with unvarying success. Queen Elisabeth thereupon grew afraid for her sovereignty and despatched the ill-fated Essex with 20,000 to subdue the "wild Irishry." But Essex soon lost his army and had to send for reinforcements which, however, proved of no avail; the Queen's favorite returned to die on the gallows. Mountjoy and Carew then landed in Ireland with a new army; they were able men and ruthless; as they marched, they devastated the country and massacred the inhabitants, so that in 1601 the rebellion was practically crushed. In September of that year Don Juan del Aguila with 3,400 Spanish troops landed at Kinsale to help the rebels. Mountjoy and Carew laid siege to the town with 12,000 men. O'Neill marched southward to its relief, but treachery and mismanagement spoiled that splendid march, and the town fell.

Very formidable, too, was the rebellion of 1641. It was caused by the persecution of the Catholics, the effort, in fact, to extirpate

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them, by ruthless and lawless measures to confiscate their property and "plant" the land with English and Scotch Protestants. The Irish chiefs, Roger (Rory) O'Moore, Sir Phelim O'Neill, Turlough O'Neill, Maguire of Fermanagh and others came together and decided to assert their rights and defend their lands with force. Their plan was to seize Dublin Castle on the 23rd October, 1641. They sent to Spain for Owen Roe O'Neill, a nephew of the great Hugh, who had risen to high honor in the Spanish army. The garrison at the Castle consisted of only a few pensioners and forty halberdiers, and the place could easily have been captured had not MacMahon, one of the rebel leaders, confided the plan to a "ruffling squire called Owen Connolly, one of a class who accompanied gentlemen of fortune at that day, took part in their quarrels, and carried their confidential messages." This man was then in the service of Sir John Clotworthy, and had become a Protestant; he was, however, so notoriously a drunkard that his story was not at first believed when he went to Sir William Parsons and told him what he had learned from MacMahon. How-

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### *Some Previous Rebellions*

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ever, MacMahon was subsequently arrested and the Castle saved. Connolly got a grant of lands and became a colonel in Cromwell's army.

The rebel leaders had issued an order that no one should be killed except in open combat, and this was strictly obeyed for a time. But soon the memory of their persecution got the upper hand with the people, and they gave full rein to their passion against those who had persecuted their religion and confiscated their lands. Sir Phelim O'Neill in the North gathered an army of 30,000, armed with scythes, knives, etc., and took stronghold after stronghold. The Loyalists, exasperated by his success, imitated the worst excesses of his worst followers, and the terrible massacre of Island Magee was the result. There, men, women and children of the Old Irish, to the number of hundreds, were driven over the cliffs into the sea.

Towards the end of 1641 the Anglo-Irish of the Pale, that is the portion of Ireland, a very small one, unquestionably under English rule, began to join the rebellion. At the same time the differences between Charles the First and his Parliament in England



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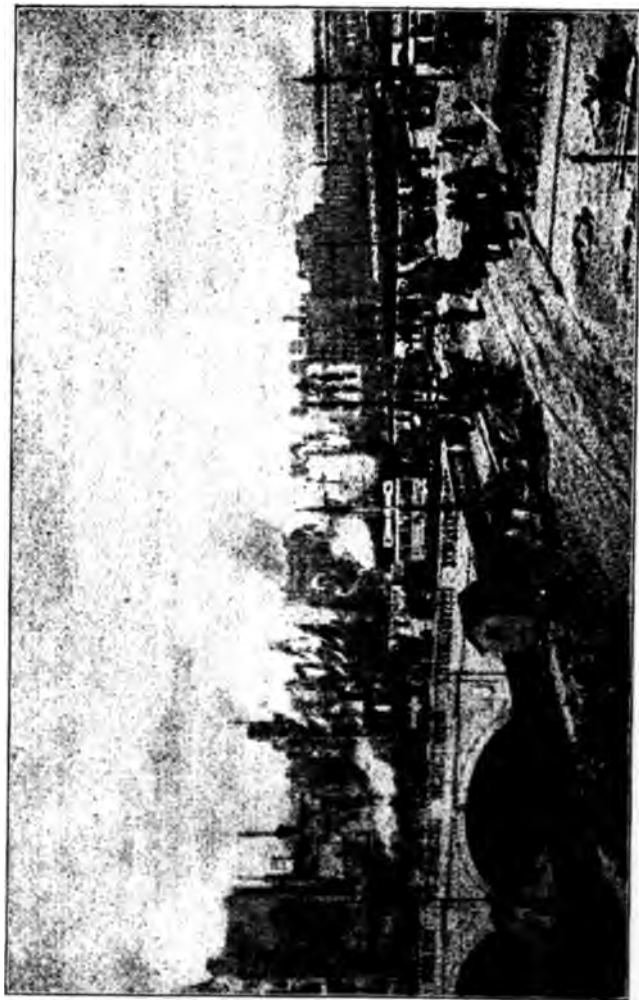
### *The Irish Rebellion*

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were growing ever more acute. So it happened that there were four parties fighting in Ireland, the Old Irish who wanted complete independence, the Anglo-Irish who wanted only a removal of Catholic grievances, being all Catholics, the Puritans under Munroe, and the King's party. The special hatred of the Old Irish was for Munroe and his Puritans.

The rebellion proceeded with varying fortune during the early months of 1641, its success retarded by Phelim O'Neill's incompetency. But in July, 1642, a great soldier, Owen Roe O'Neill, landed with 100 officers, and took over Phelim's command. Soon after, Colonel Thomas Preston who had defended Louvain also arrived.

There was considerable jealousy between the Old Irish under O'Neill and the Anglo-Irish under Preston, and the Catholic clergy set themselves to unite the two sections. On the 24th October, 1642, the Confederation of Kilkenny, at which representatives of both sides assisted, began its sessions. It consisted of 11 bishops, 14 lords and 226 commoners. It repudiated the designation of rebels, blamed the Puritans, and assured the



DESTRUCTION OF EDEN QUAY

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King of its loyalty; it appointed generals, O'Neill for Ulster and Preston for Leinster, levied money and men. Charles was not slow to see the advantage of having the Confederates on his side, and in 1643 he dickered with them a great deal; but in March, Preston was defeated at Ross by Ormonde who was continually deceiving the King and serving the Parliament, and O'Neill had a hard time in Ulster. In April, 1643, the Confederates and the King reached a truce, but the Parliament ordered Munroe and his Puritans to keep up the war.

In 1645 Charles made a further secret agreement with the Confederates, guaranteeing them religious freedom in return for their help. In all these negotiations the Old Irish were voted down by the Anglo-Irish. The former were not very confident as to the value of English promises. Later that year the Pope sent over Rinuccini to propagate Catholicism, to unite the two parties who were continually squabbling, and to help the King against the Parliament.

After three years of inaction, due to these differences, O'Neill led his total force of 5,000 men against 8,000 Covenanters under

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Munroe at Benburb in Armagh and won a glorious victory. But in 1647 O'Neill and Preston vainly laid siege to Dublin. So far as the Old Irish were concerned the rebellion collapsed on the death of Owen Roe on the 6th November, 1649. He was without doubt a great military genius, and had he not been handicapped by the dissensions related above, and the incompetency of Preston, he might have intrenched the Irish nation so firmly that Cromwell could never have wasted the country as he did in the years succeeding O'Neill's death.

The Cromwellian invasion is about the blackest period in English persecution of Ireland. Under Cromwell, Irish Catholic men, women and children were massacred in cold blood or sent as slaves to the West Indies. The champion of religious freedom in England became in Ireland the most damnable exemplar of religious intolerance that even those hideous years could show.

James II having fled incontinently to France, William of Orange took easy possession of the throne of England. But he had to fight in Ireland, for the Irish remained loyal to the Stuarts. There is no

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chapter of Irish history which records greater gallantry than that in which is related how Black Hugh O'Neill, Sarsfield and their comrades gave up their worthy lives for a worthless King. When finally they surrendered at Limerick they marched out with drums beating and colors flying. Theirs was an honorable surrender, carrying with it permission to join the army of France. Then was laid the foundation of that Irish Brigade which on the field of Fontenoy was to avenge Limerick, and which between 1691 and 1745 gave 450,000 lives to the service of France.

The era of the penal laws followed on the "Broken Treaty" of Limerick—the English failed to keep the pact made at the capitulation—but it was not until 1790 that the possibility of another rebellion loomed large. In 1791 Theobald Wolfe Tone, the Protestant secretary of a committee formed to procure the redress of Catholic grievances, founded the United Irishmen. He designed to include all classes and all religions in the ranks of the new society whose primary purpose was to reform Parliament and to secure the removal of religious grievances.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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However the French Revolution was then having an immense influence on Irish political thought, especially among the Presbyterians of Ulster, and men again began to dream of rebellion. Wolfe Tone and his comrades looked for help from France, and Wolfe Tone made such an impression on Napoleon that on December 1st, 1796, Hoche sailed from Brest with 15,000 men and 45,000 stand of arms. Luck was against the Irish; Hoche's fleet was dispersed by a storm. And in July, 1797, a Dutch fleet under De Winter sailing to help the rebels was defeated at Camperdown by the British under Duncan.

In May, 1797, a proclamation was issued by the Viceroy disarming the people; 200,000 pikes and several thousand firelocks were seized. A reign of terror ensued, during which there were wholesale arrests, executions, and selling of "rebels" into slavery. The regular army was increased to 80,000, and in addition there were English and Scotch troops and yeomanry to the number of 30,000. The coast defences were strengthened against invasion.

But preparations for rebellion went on,

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### *Some Previous Rebellions*

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nevertheless, although every move was known to the Government through its spies and paid agents, the most notorious of whom were MacNally and Reynolds. Towards the end of 1798 Arthur O'Connor, Father O'Coigley and other leaders were arrested at Margate on their way to France; further arrests of leaders followed, but their places were taken by still more intrepid spirits. Wolfe Tone, the most intrepid, the most brilliant and the most resourceful of them all still remained at large.

A day was finally fixed for the rebellion—the 23rd May, 1798; the signal of revolt was to be the stopping of the mail coaches that ran from Dublin to all parts of the country. But the plot was betrayed; on the 19th May, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the military director and the most romantic of all the romantic Geraldines, was arrested after a struggle in which he received wounds that caused his death shortly afterwards in prison. The brothers Sheares also were arrested, and executed. At Rathfarnham and Dunboyne, near Dublin, on the 24th, the rebels scored small successes. It took ten days to subdue County Kildare, but the most formidable re-



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sistance of the rebellion came from County Wexford.

There the excesses of the military had driven a peaceful and prosperous population of farmers to desperation. The Wexford men had been by no means prominent in the ranks of the United Irishmen. But on Whit Sunday, the 27th May, Father John Murphy found his little chapel at Kilcormick burned to the ground. He thereupon told his flock that it would be fitter to die in battle than endure what they were enduring, and he offered to lead them in the field. Soon he had 2,000 variously armed peasants under his command, and no irregular troops have ever fought more bravely than they did. They scattered body after body of regular troops, and soon from hilltop to hilltop the bonfires blazed which signalled to every man with red blood in his veins that he should assert his manhood. Father Michael Murphy with a large but undisciplined mass of men joined the rebels at Carnew.

At Enniscorthy, Carrickbyrne and Gorey three great rebel encampments were formed, and fierce battles were fought. The rebels

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were defeated at Gorey, but at Tubberneering they routed a large force of infantry and cavalry and captured a flag. New Ross fell to them quickly after a bitter fight, only to be lost through lack of discipline. Then the tide turned against the rebels, and they were finally scattered at Vinegar Hill by General Lake with a regular army numbering 20,000.

On August 22nd the French General, Humbert, landed at Killala on the west coast with 1,000 men. About 3,000 Irish peasants joined him, and together they advanced towards Castlebar, hunting the English troops before them. But after some further success Humbert succumbed to superior numbers at Ballinamuck. A smaller French force landed a few days afterwards in Donegal, but it was quickly routed. Finally another expedition sailed from Brest on the 20th September, but the fleet was scattered by a storm, and what remained of it to reach the Irish coast was easily defeated by Admiral Warren. Wolfe Tone was on board the *Hoche*, the leading ship, and was arrested. He was tried by courtmartial and sentenced to be hanged after he had vainly begged to be shot as a

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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French officer. He was never executed; the dauntless man committed suicide in his cell.

In 1803, Robert Emmet, with the help of the remaining members of the executive of the United Irishmen, planned a revolt. Emmet's plans were laid with amazing care, daring, and secrecy. He set up two depôts for the collection and manufacture of arms "within a stone's throw" of Dublin-Castle, one in Marshalsea Lane, the other in Patrick Street. He worked so quietly that he was not known even by sight to the workmen there. His chief supporters in the country were Michael Dwyer, the "Wicklow outlaw," and Thomas Russell, the friend of Wolfe Tone, who was organising Antrim and Down.

An explosion in the Patrick Street dépôt destroyed whatever chance Emmet's rebellion had. That put the Government on its guard, and Emmet was forced to hasten the date of his rising. Considering his scanty equipment, the insurrection would seem to have been a mad adventure; yet it is worth noting that military authorities have extolled his plans highly.

After an abortive attempt to capture

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### *Some Previous Rebellions*

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Dublin Castle, Emmet fled to the mountains. But the young rebel was engaged to Sarah Curran, daughter of a famous advocate, and to see his beloved he braved the military and returned to Dublin. At Harold's Cross he was arrested, and soon afterwards he was hanged outside St. Catherine's Church in Thomas Street; when he was dead his head was cut off and exhibited to the crowd.

Emmet's speech from the dock at his trial, his love story, his youth, his brave, generous spirit have made his immortality secure. Russell was executed soon after Emmet, Dwyer was banished to New South Wales—and rebellion had spent itself for nearly fifty years.

Elsewhere in this book Father Gavan Duffy has outlined the ideals of "Young Ireland." The actual rebellion of 1848 may be quickly disposed of. When it took place Davis, the genius of Young Ireland, was dead, Mitchel, the one indubitable man of action among the leaders, was in exile, and Gavan Duffy was in prison. So the leadership fell on William Smith O'Brien, a man of mature age who hated the very name of revolution and disorder. Yet after the ar-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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rest of the other leaders, the "proclamation" of certain counties, and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, even he felt there was nothing to do but fight.

He made a journey through the South in the spring of 1848 to feel its pulse, and he was generally acclaimed. The Nationalist societies wherever organised were strong for action. Delegates had been sent to France and Scotland and America; it was hoped that in a few months Ireland could make a creditable stand.

But the Government took prompt action, shifting and strengthening the garrisons; and when, as the last leaders of the people were about to be jailed, it was suggested that Kilkenny or Carrick should take the initiative in revolt, the local leaders pointed out that the government was quite ready to crush any attempt in blood. But Smith O'Brien was convinced that the first spark of rebellion would start a general rising.

His first muster of "armed force" was in the village of Mullinahone, where he kept his men out all day, with no food but what his own slender purse could buy and no enemy on whom to vent their wrath. He

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### *Some Previous Rebellions*

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forbade them to damage property, and in general was so quixotic and hopeless a leader that the local priests soon persuaded the people to disband. The final disruption occurred in the neighboring village of Ballynary, where O'Brien forbade his forces to fire on the police lest they might kill some children who were in the house where the police had taken refuge! The people thereupon dispersed, and O'Brien "who had acted throughout with preternatural coolness, turned from the place with a broken heart." No more chivalrous and futile a leader has ever appeared under a banner of revolt. The Government exiled him and other leaders to Australia.

The next rebellion was in 1867—Mr. Reidy has dealt adequately with it in the chapter on the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

MAURICE JOY.

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## CHAPTER XIII

### YOUNG IRELAND

1842-1848

Yes! thine is the fire that, now sacredly glowing,  
Impels my wrapt soul to bright liberty's shrine.  
The wave was congealed till thy breath set it flowing—  
God gave me the lyre, but to tune it was thine.  
The *Nation's* Valentine.

**I**T has been the enviable (and yet unwelcome) fortune of the British, in their imperial career, ever to quicken the national self-consciousness of the peoples they have ruled. And no sooner has this well-nigh inevitable phenomenon come to light than they have resented it as disloyal and seditious.

A subject nation is like a boy at school. For we say, in education, that the two elements which most speedily and surely develop the sense of individuality in a boy are *responsibility* and *punishment*. And both of these a subject nation gets.



**O'CONNELL STREET BEFORE AND AFTER THE REBELLION**  
(This Street is Known also as Sackville Street)



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## *Young Ireland*

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No sooner does the subject nation begin to be held responsible for the observance of statutes that check its natural impulses (its "spirit," that elusive compound of past experience and racial tendency) than it awakens to the fact that it *is* and, somehow, *matters*. This new sense of corporate unity and of relativity promptly develops, in the face of contradiction, into a desire for self-expression and a militant nationalism is born.

Shocked at this first manifestation of personality on the part of a subject people, the British, rather skilled in imperialism than sympathetic to mankind, have been wont to make a show of stern repression the moment they have detected the moodiness consequent on growing pains. At this the national spirit has been thoroughly aroused, and the trouble has become chronic. If I say that of this Ireland affords the most obvious example, it must be understood that by "subject" I mean simply "held in subjection."

It would not be true to say that the *first* contact of alien rulers with their "subjects" has *always* produced a clash and the thunder of hostility; but it will not be denied by any that the *dénouement* has frequently been such,

and more so in the case of Great Britain than in that of other imperial powers, on account of her particular characteristics; if her lack of imagination and of nervousness, combined with her undoubted tenacity, may be said to have contributed much to her becoming one of the "powers," those same dispositions have made her peculiarly unsuited to reckon with the subtler forces that do really move humanity, not least those more mystic races with which she has been brought in contact—such forces as religion, ideals and even, more materially, poetry and song.

The study of past revolutions reveals two main sources of discontent in the body politic. Either the *de facto* government has never been accepted by the nation, being alien and uncongenial, and the nation now and then reiterates its non-acceptance; or else, in a duly constituted State, one element dominates (by virtue either of routine or of greed), and the others (or some of them) rise up in contradiction.

In Ireland, by the double circumstance of alien rule and of landlordism there has been a combination of the two causes; never, indeed, more keenly felt than in 1848, when the Famine had brought them both home, in the

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### *Young Ireland*

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most graphic manner, to the individual imagination.

Be the causes what they may, the process by which revolutions mature, as distinct from the ætiology of wars, is apt to be somewhat as follows: little by little there spreads among the masses a discontent, arising from provocation really, though often unconsciously, evil (at least in part) and felt vaguely by the generality of the nation; but yet nothing more than a *malaise*, until such time as a voice be found to give it an objective name; this voice starts not unfrequently from the midst of the educated youth of the discontented country; it crystallises the grievances which it finds in suspense among the people, and hands them back in aphoristic formulæ, which, being promptly made accessible in song and verse and popular tags and slogans, turns the smouldering uneasiness into a flame of enthusiastic nationalism (in the case of a subject country) or plebeism (in the case of abused power in a national *régime*). Instantly, whatever there may be at hand of excitable and reckless natures will be found in the capacity of firebrands, and, while seeking to make a bonfire of the oppression, will be very apt to set fire

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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to the houses of the oppressed; and where there truly was a grievance there is now added the sense of dullness that the dreamed-of remedy proved unavailing . . . happy if that survive which alone is valuable in the whole process, viz., the work of those who translated the popular discontent into permanent formulæ that have their truth and value for all the generations to come, and the example of heroic unselfishness given by those who sacrificed themselves in the conflagration.

The Young Ireland Party of 1848 was fortunate in this respect; for, while its insurrection failed, its ideals subsisted as a foundation upon which Irish nationalism has been building ever since; and, moreover, its names are honoured and will not die.

It will be promptly rejoined that O'Connell, and not Young Ireland, provided that foundation, and mistakenly; for, though O'Connell did much to make Ireland conscious of her wrongs, and though he righted one of them, yet was his appeal not to "National feeling, National habits, National government," (as was that of the first number of the *Nation*), but rather to the sentiment of our inferior position even in the British System. And if he has

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### *Young Ireland*

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the undoubted merit of having voiced boldly, in associations and monster meetings, the grievances whispered up to that time in underground societies, yet were his sources of inspiration rather ethical than national, rather imperial than Irish.

But the new note was one of pride of race and deathless confidence in the destiny of the country. The stand was not that of an ill-treated part of any system, but that of a nation spoiled of its natural and inherent rights. And the fostering of that national self-consciousness by every means at its disposal won immortality for Young Ireland, far more than any explosion into which it was betrayed. In a word, the vital germ which has survived and fructified, is the germ of nationalism which was brought to that first meeting of Davis and Duffy and Dillon under the tree in Phœnix Park rather than the violent accretions subsequently imported by Lalor and exploited by Mitchel.<sup>1</sup> And if it be true that, partly by the natural evolution of their own doctrines of

<sup>1</sup> Of all the "Young Ireland" writers, Mitchel had the strongest influence on the insurgents of 1916, especially through his *Jail Journal*, a brilliant and bitter Carlylean arraignment of England.—EDITOR.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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nationalism, partly by the ambience of the spirit which made revolutions throughout Europe at that date, but still more by the action upon them of British opposition on the one hand and on the other of forces from their own midst, brilliant and therefore popular, fearless and therefore imprudent, even the moderate and permanent leaders of the movement were brought ultimately to make a show of physical resistance, yet not for this do we their sons most honor them, but for the statesmanlike utterances and abundant national vitality of the *Nation's* best articles.

Before the files of the *Nation* newspapers and the two large volumes later consecrated by the *Nation's* editor to the history of this epoch, one's powers of condensation are sorely tried. A lover of Ireland can pore over these files and feel his heart swell and throb under their magic spell. Of the earlier of the two volumes above referred to, the *Irishman* reviewer said: "It will remain a sort of political evangel for the guidance of generations, raising up the hearts and the standards of the people, chastening the aspirations of the race and transforming them into the noble instincts of a nation," and more to the same effect.

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And he adds an appreciation of Duffy which, since it is borne out by the majority of writers on the subject, may duly be set down at the beginning of our account of what Young Ireland did.

"In Duffy's historical volumes, each of the Confederates has received his meed of appreciative praise, good measure, well pressed and brimming over, with the one exception of the author himself. This should be remembered to him whose brain originated an Irish literature . . . and whose life-history was summed up in the words of Charles Kickham: 'Duffy is the father of us all.'"

It is probable, nevertheless, that Davis had the broadest mind and the greatest soul in the Young Ireland party. At any rate he had a compelling influence on Gavan Duffy, who, until death, regarded him as the *beau idéal* of patriotism and sterling worth. But his early end threw the whole burden upon Duffy's "power of initiative and organization," (I quote Martin McDermott) "without which, notwithstanding Davis' splendid talents, there never would have been a *Nation* newspaper or a Young Ireland Party." So that, in the event, according to outside opinion (in the columns



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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of the *London Times*), in spite of "the genuine modesty with which he (Duffy) always attributes the origin of the school (for, in the true sense, it was a school rather than a party) to Thomas Davis, he will, we think, be always regarded as its true founder." However that may be, Mitchel witnesses to the situation as it stood subsequently to the death of Davis: "I should say this," he wrote, "I am not the editor of the *Nation*—my friend Mr. Duffy is editor and proprietor; my friend Mr. Duffy is, in fact, the *Nation*."

We are then justified in letting Gavan Duffy speak of the *Nation's* aims and of its progress, and we shall do so in the remainder of this sketch, acknowledging our plagiarism with an occasional quotation-mark.

"I aimed from the outset to stamp upon the *Nation* an individuality like that which distinguishes an honourable man, from whom it is instinctively felt that nothing underhand or unfair need be feared."

"The *Nation* was not a journal designed to chronicle the small beer of current politics, but to teach opinions, and this task was never neglected. The ideal of an historic nationality embracing the whole people, of

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whatever creed or origin, was a topic to which Davis constantly applied himself. Dillon, to whom the practical side of life appealed most keenly, painted the desolate condition of the tenant-at-will, and analysed the exceptional laws under which he cowered. For my part I insisted over and over again on the need of systematised self-education. Of all the revolutionary forces education was the greatest. Ignorance cowers, whines and despairs: trained men are patient and hopeful. It was the schoolmaster who liberated America, and who was preparing the inevitable liberation of Germany and Italy. The deliverance of the Irish people might be distant, but it was sure, on the sole condition that they be true to themselves. Davis said that education was a resource, indeed, but slow; we ought to be able to win the help of classes already educated. We must strive to carry with us *all* the elements of a nation, its gentry, merchants, as well as its artisans and peasantry. Ulster, jealous and froward as she was . . . must be won. We wanted the help of the Protestant middle class. The best of them were friendly to every popular demand except the final one; our bitterest enemies among them were de-

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scendants of the men who surrounded Tone and Russell in Belfast fifty years before."

The motto over the editorial column of the *Nation* was as follows: "To create and foster public opinion in Ireland—to make it racy of the soil." In the first number an appeal was made for "National feelings, National habits and National government"; the method was to be one of constant endeavour to conciliate all classes of Irishmen to the cause of Ireland. A little later we find any resort to arms explicitly deprecated "in the present condition of the country"; the movement was one not of aggression, but of self-reliance. Before long the *Nation*, under the caption "Ecclesiastical Intelligence," was publishing both Catholic and Protestant news (and, incidentally, in its desire to weld all parties and all sects, it got many a hard knock from the extremists on every hand).

Politically, it was splendidly sound, and as much superior in guiding and enlightening power to the papers of to-day as the sunlight is to our most modern street-lamps. In the early weeks of 1848 several numbers gave considerable prominence to the debates of the Irish Confederation on some of the gravest

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issues of the party; it is within our scope to give a brief *précis* of the political platform of Young Ireland as outlined officially in the course of those debates.

Since the death of O'Connell there was no AUTHORITY in Ireland recognised by the whole nation and able to counsel it successfully; but, to a national movement that should succeed, such an authority was indispensable. It might be re-created, not in the old shape, but in a shape as effectual. A small number of able and honest men, who devoted their lives to the purpose, might constitute the nucleus from which such a power would grow. They would win authority in the most legitimate way, by deserving it. The first condition of success was that they should be governed not only by fixed principles, but by a scheme of policy carefully framed and deliberately worked out to the end. The sudden explosion of an outraged people had sometimes given liberty to a nation; but mere turbulence or agitation, with no definite scheme of action, never. The Repeal Association was a disastrous example in latter times; it was like a great steam power that turned no machinery.

The first agent we wanted was a Parliamentary Party. It need not be a large party, but it must include men trained in political science, and familiar with the past and present of Ireland, and who would devote themselves to the task until it was accomplished. The House of Commons is a platform which all Europe looks upon, and the Irish Party must teach all Europe to understand the iniquity of English government in Ireland

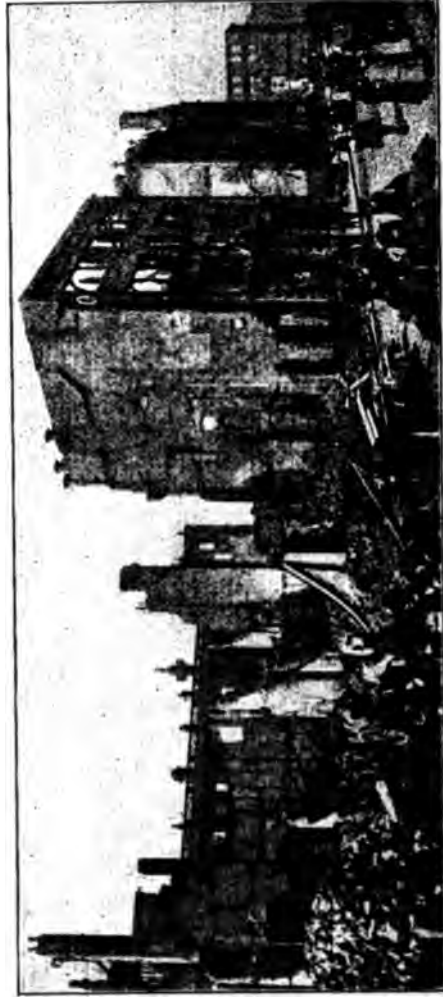
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in the way they understand the case of Italy or Poland. This course would not only revive the sympathy of foreign nations, but win that of just Englishmen; and, still better, would gain the trust of the Irish people by effectual work done on their behalf. In an assembly so divided as the British Parliament, against party leaders so weak as those who governed in our time, such a league would be formidable. A score of Irish members of adequate capacity and character might rule the House. No previous failure counted for anything against this project, because there never had been such an Irish Party in the British Parliament. For it must be distinctly understood that it was not by consent of Parliament but in spite of it, not by its grace and favour but because of its utter impotence against the right, vigorously asserted, that we would succeed. This Irish Party must be kept pure and above suspicion by a pledge never to ask or accept favours for themselves or others from any Government, and must exhibit no preference between Whig and Tory. Whoever could help Ireland were their friends. Such a party, encamped within the walls of Parliament, would, in the language of a high Conservative authority, be 'more formidable than armed insurrection.'

For success it was altogether indispensable that they should be the authentic representatives of the Irish nation, and their main business would be to increase and fortify national opinion at home, from which their authority would spring. The Confederates at home must labour to secure the election to the corporations and boards of guardians of men of trust, intelligence and perseverance.



THE RUINS IN MIDDLE ABBEY STREET

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These representative bodies might act as local Parliaments, and supply as far as possible by counsel and guidance the present want of a legislature. Ireland had never since '82 put forth systematically the power that lies in the awakened public spirit of a nation to *help* itself. That power might be developed as effectively in great industrial and commercial efforts, or in conquering natural impediments to prosperity, as in war. So it was in Holland, so it was in Canada, so it was in some of the States of America. Such a public spirit would have saved us from famine in 1847; it might lay the basis of a new social system in 1848. The power of organisation should be also constantly directed against foreign institutions. The numerous commissions of foreigners who pretended to transact Irish business should not only be incessantly watched and controlled, but as many of them as possible should be superseded by voluntary boards composed of Irishmen.

If these powers were wisely used, hurting no Irish interest, some of the grand juries would be won to the same views as they had been in '43. Ulster would probably follow, for, with the North, Nationality was only a question of time and securities.

When the representatives of Ireland in Parliament had made the case of Ireland plain to all men, and when the organisation at home had been so successful as to raise these representatives, however few in numbers, to the undeniable position of the spokesmen of a nation, it would be their right and duty, as it was demonstrably within their power, to stop the entire business of the House of Commons till the Constitution of Ireland was



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restored. But this was a measure which, to be successful, must be taken on behalf of a nation. It must have the authority of an outraged nation to justify it, and raise it above the tactics of mere party strife, and the strength of a banded nation to maintain it if it were violently suppressed. For such a position there seemed but two outlets—that of concession to Ireland, or the forcible ejection of the Irish representatives from the House of Commons. If the former, our end is attained; if the latter, let the rejected members fall back upon the banded and organised people whom they represent.

In a crisis like this the great Council of the Nation, consisting of all the elected representatives of the people in Parliament or in local institutions, must be summoned. Such a Council would naturally demand the restoration of the Irish Parliament. A like demand was conceded without parley in 1782, and it still must be conceded whenever it became undeniably a national demand. But if not, the people would again have an authority created by themselves, and they would adopt the measure which it counselled. The English Minister would probably capitulate, as Peel capitulated to Canada in 1842. If not, a nation of seven millions united in a single purpose, and guided by trusty counsellors, would know how to enforce their will.

Under the present circumstances of the country this was our policy for the winning of an independent Parliament for Ireland. If there was any shorter road open to a people so divided and broken as ours, we did not know it. For, to create not merely a vague desire, but

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a confident trust in our ways and means was a preliminary necessity to success. We must choose our path once for all, and if it was not the right path, remember that every step was a step astray.

Needless to say, such a programme was never attempted in full either before or since, because there was never that powerful and truly national organisation at home upon which the report lays so much stress. And it is a very different thing for our parliamentary representatives (even had they ever been such men as the report supposes) to fight for a country relapsed into listlessness or galvanised into spasmodic discontent, from what it would be to fight for a nation such as the report takes it for granted Ireland is about to become.

The *Nation* made its reputation in a few weeks and, within a year, was an indispensable institution. It "wound itself into the fibres of the Irish heart. The poor peasants clubbed their pence that they might hear on their day of rest what they could do for the cause; the young tradesmen, to whom it had become almost as necessary as their daily bread, clung to it. The Conservative students enjoyed it as a stolen pleasure, trembling to be caught in an act of patriotism; the Irish exiles in England

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or France, or felling forests in Canada or digging railways in the Western Republic, who still longed, like their predecessors, to hear 'how was old Ireland and how did she stand,' the poor Irish soldier who stole into a secret place with his treasure, the young priest who judged it with his own brain and conscience and not by word of command, cherished it the more for the dangers that it ran."

In his *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*, Mr. Lecky says: "What the *Nation* was when Gavan Duffy edited it, when Davis, McCarthy and their brilliant associates contributed to it, and when its columns maintained with unqualified zeal the cause of liberty and nationality in every land, Irishmen can never forget. Seldom has a journal of the kind exhibited a more splendid combination of eloquence, poetry and reasoning."

Space forbids that we should mention the achievements of each of those "brilliant associates"; they have been analysed and recorded at full length in Gavan Duffy's published works. Just a word as to their mutual relations will be sufficient for our purpose.

"The tumult of passion on the battle-field scarcely transcends the torpor of ordinary

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existence more than the vivid sense of life which beats in the pulses of men who hope to accomplish memorable changes. There was no rivalry among the young men, not only because there was a spirit above personal aims, but because every man's place was ascertained and acknowledged. He had a free field, and *faisait son fait* according to his gifts. If he did new and unexpected work, as sometimes happened, it was credited to him with no more cavil or contumacy than a sum placed to one's credit by his banker." In the early days Davis was the soul of this little body of men. He was "so helpful with his stores of knowledge, so simple, so gay in hours of relaxation. Whatever subject one of them was studying, Davis could be counted upon to find the essential books and to furnish more serviceable help from the living library of his memory and judgment. The variety of questions he had thought out was a constant marvel to his comrades. 'He is like a Cairo orange,' said Mc-Nevin; 'puncture him anywhere, and out flows a succulent stream.' When a comrade neglected a work to which he was pledged, Davis, though the task of making good the deficiency often fell upon himself, forgave

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with a smile and a shake of the head. When one of them came to him with some crude and extravagant proposal (it was a time when those novelties grew plentifully) his quiet 'Do you think so?' rarely failed to make the querist reconsider his opinion."

The main effort was directed to keeping the *Nation* up to tone (Wolfe Tone, as the Englishman said). But simultaneously the young men entered upon a dizzy whirl of enterprises "to teach assiduously to the people what the State basely decreed they should not learn—a pious and generous, but unspeakably difficult task."

"A stream of projects and suggestions, which showed the mind of the country alert and vigorous, flowed in even from distant correspondents. It was proposed to bring home our illustrious dead; Grattan from his 'cold English grave,' which his cold English friends had not marked by any bust or slab; Barry from Saint Paul's; Luke Wadding from the Tiber; Usher from the unnoted corner of Westminster Abbey where he mouldered; Duns Scotus from Cologne; Goldsmith from under the flagstones of London; and our soldiers and scholars from France and Belgium,

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from Austria and Italy, from Spain, New Spain and the United States; Hugh O'Neill from Rome; Hugh O'Donnell from Valladolid; Nicholas French from Ghent; Sarsfield from Belgium; Thomas Addis Emmet from New York. This was a project worthy of a free State, but beyond the capacity of a State only struggling to be free."

Ballad poetry was one of the most successful and efficacious weapons of the new force. The first volume was Gavan Duffy's collection, rescued from forgotten books and periodicals. Up to that time "Irish Ballad" had only a grotesque meaning. It proved a keen delight to sympathetic readers to find that Ireland had produced Anglo-Irish and Celtic ballads which might be classed with the ballads of Scotland and Germany. The book was received with enthusiasm, and went into six editions within a year. Later on, when the Young Irelanders had themselves written a plentiful supply of ballads for the *Nation* (at which work Davis and Clarence Mangan distinguished themselves above the rest), a new collection, called the *Spirit of the Nation*, was issued, and proved more popular still than the first. Moore's melodies, it was felt, were "the

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wail of a lost cause; while the songs of the *Nation* vibrated with the virile and passionate hopes of a new generation."

The *Library of Ireland* was one of the earliest ventures. It aimed at bringing before the country all the lives and all the periods of history that were calculated to stir the national sentiment. It embraced not only the achievements of our warriors and the productions of our literary and oratorical geniuses of the past, but purported to cover also the lives of the Irish saints and missionaries who had earned for Erin her proudest titles. Indeed, a point noteworthy in connection with the wide interests of the *Nation* is that, from the first month of its appearance, a weekly column was given up to recording the doings of Irish missionaries, far and near (a feature which has not come into the papers of our own day until within the last half-dozen years, and still not into all), for the *Nation* was not slow to recognize those lives as an asset for the glory of the race.

There was nothing which could be made

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vate and educate our people. . . . The young men who gathered round the *Nation* brought to the cause the supreme stimulus of imagination. Under their inspiration the monster meetings were held on historic sites, rich in inspiring memories; bands were formed, banners were lifted above the multitude, and the people began to muster and march in ordered ranks. Historic books and pictures became common, and there soon might be found in every district of the country students reared in the new ideas."

A little later a social club was started, called the "Eighty-Two Club," to draw into the movement men who would never cross the threshold of Conciliation Hall.

"The work of a generation was accomplished in a few years, and, if fortune had been kind, would have been crowned with signal success. It was a time of incessant labour and responsibility, richly repaid by the conviction that we were assisting in the resurrection of our country."

Such in very deed was the effect they were helping to bring about—the resurrection of the country, which, in spite of multitudinous mis-haps, once risen, has not died again; and the



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man who undertakes to tell the world the history of Young Ireland would, in the words of Daniel Deniehy, "overlook one of its highest services to Ireland if he omitted to tell how, by ineffably fine sympathies and continuous guiding and teaching to holy ends, they moulded into noble and vigorous forms the intellect and spirit of the young men of Ireland."

From the first number of the *Nation* to the last the standard of purest national devotion is kept floating; and if there is a difference in *policy* between the "Creed of the Nation" in the last number and the editorial columns of the first, there can be detected none at all in the *ideal* proposed and in the spirit shown throughout the six intervening years. The same scathing words which, in the early days, sting into patriotism those who are supine, still in the closing issues urge on those who hold back in the nation's hour of need; the same lessons of obedience and confidence in the leaders which are taught while a peaceful policy is being framed, are still heard when, with forces shattered, a handful of chiefs is calling on the people to arm. If it is easy for us to give, in glowing terms, our thanks and praise

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to the men of '48, it was hard for them to earn them; for not only was there an intellectual and moral struggle of every hour for six years, but not a man of them all expected to escape from the issue with his life.

There is this difference between history and fiction: that in the latter we are chiefly concerned to know "what happened in the end," whereas in the former we know that, whatever happened, the causes which preceded and the effects which followed the event were far more instructive and often more conclusive than itself. Young Ireland created Irish nationalism, a spirit which, once born, is immortal. The nation's body may be starved and broken, its mind may be stunted and led astray; but the spirit, until the coming of such a cataclysm as would destroy the nation utterly and carry off its all into the realms of history, is with us still.

Not in having made an Irish Revolution, then, lies the merit of Young Ireland, but in having made an Irish Nation.

T. GAVAN DUFFY.

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## CHAPTER XIV

### THE IRISH REPUBLICAN BROTHERHOOD

**T**HE uprising in Ireland, which began on Easter Monday, April 24, 1916, has been described in many quarters as the "Sinn Fein Revolt," or the "Sinn Fein Rebellion." The English have a habit of fastening an appellation on any movement aimed at the overthrow of British authority or the injury of British interests, and of heaping all the infamy and obloquy possible on the name they have given it.

The casual reader who knows nothing of the meaning of *Sinn Féin* has been led to think by many English writers and their imitators that a Sinn Feiner is a monstrosity, that only the depraved and those lost beyond hope of redemption would have anything to do with such a movement. Half a century ago British parents and West Britons in Ireland, when they wanted to frighten their children into be-

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ing good, warned them that if they did not behave the Fenians would get them, the assumption, of course, being that in order to be a full-fledged Fenian an Irishman had to eat a loyalist child once a day, omitting Fridays and fast days.

*Sinn Féin* means "ourselves," conveying the idea that Ireland can only hope for regeneration by being self-reliant; and the *Sinn Féin* idea is not new in Ireland. The leaders of the Young Ireland party of 1848 sang and wrote and preached the gospel of self-reliance. What has been known in the last dozen years or so in Ireland as the *Sinn Féin* policy is only a modification or extension of the doctrines of Fintan Lalor, Thomas Davis and John Mitchel.

But Sinn Féin as a political party has not existed in Ireland for seven or eight years, although the principles of that movement, having influenced Irish affairs long before the *Sinn Féin* policy was introduced to the Irish people, have lived on after the dissolution of Sinn Féin as an organized political force.

To put it briefly, the inspiration of the centuries-old desire of the Irish people for freedom from foreign rule was what brought

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about the recent uprising. The organizations through which that desire manifested itself in active effort were, as was made clear in the Declaration of Irish Independence, read at the base of Nelson's Pillar in Dublin, the secret Irish revolutionary body known as the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and the public organization, the Irish Volunteers. These and that sturdy band of representatives of Irish Labor, the Citizen Army, did the fighting in the Irish capital against superior odds in the way of numbers and vastly superior equipment, so that even the enemies of the revolutionists admit their stubborn heroism.

When the inside history of the latest Irish revolt is written, this point will be made clear—neither German nor Irish-American influence caused the uprising of Easter Monday, nor could cause it.

Let it be iterated and reiterated, then, that this latest manifestation of the fact that Ireland is not conquered yet was no "Sinn Fein" rebellion prompted by foreign agencies; that instead it was an attempt on the part of Ireland to regain the control of her own affairs and her own destinies and drive the stranger



**ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN, WITH THE SHELBOURNE HOTEL IN THE  
BACKGROUND**



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who has so long made himself master in her house, outside her gates.

No people that ever struck for the restoration of their freedom refused outside aid, when that aid was offered in a friendly spirit. The theory that it was reprehensible for the Irish rebels to ask or receive military supplies from the Power that is fighting England is peculiarly English. England herself has not declined the aid of anybody, not even the sharp-toothed sons of the Cannibal Islands, in the present war. She has placed France in a position where the latter is doing the most of the fighting on the western front, but when French aid was sought by the Irish Revolutionists in 1798 and 1803 she branded Tone's and Emmet's actions as the basest kind of perfidy just as she to-day stigmatizes the actions of Casement and the men she has shot to death.

The leaders of the latest Irish uprising knew well the difficulties in their way, but they realized that the British Government was preparing to strike both the secret organization, the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood, and the public organization, the Irish Volunteers. The Government's purpose was to arrest and deport the Irish leaders, then disarm



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and disband the rank and file and, having accomplished that much, extend conscription to Ireland. The Irish leaders, knowing the intentions of the Government and feeling that it was nobler to fight and die for Ireland in Ireland than perish fighting for England on the battlefields of continental Europe, decided to strike first.

They counted on aid, in the way of military supplies, from Germany. How that expedition was betrayed and intercepted and how the crew of the German ship sank their vessel rather than allow it to become a British naval prize is already well known.

Had the German ship landed, 20,000 more men could have been armed in the South and West of Ireland, and the troops that were sent from Munster and Connacht to quell the Dublin revolt would have had more than enough to do in those two provinces.

The Irish Republican Brotherhood, which played so important a part in the recent rebellion, sprang from the Young Ireland movement of 1848, as that in turn was the successor of the movement of 1798 and 1803. In 1855 the Emmet Monument Association was organized in New York by Michael Doheny

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and John O'Mahony, two of the 1848 exiles. The man who really laid the foundations of the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Ireland was Joseph Deneiffe, a Kilkenny man, who, in 1856, on returning from the United States to Ireland, succeeded in establishing the Emmet Monument Association in Dublin. From that organization the Irish Republican Brotherhood, which was formally organized in the Irish Capital on St. Patrick's Day (March 17th), 1858, sprang. Deneiffe, on several occasions, was the bearer of important messages between the Irish leaders on both sides of the Atlantic.

From its inception every member of the I. R. B. has been bound by a solemn obligation. As the oath of membership has been published before more than once it will not be a revelation of any secret to give it here. It is as follows:

I, A B, in the presence of Almighty God, do solemnly swear allegiance to the Irish Republic, now virtually established; and that I will do my very utmost, at every risk, while life lasts, to defend its independence and integrity; and, finally, that I will yield implicit obedience in all things, not contrary to the laws of God, to the commands of my superior officers. So help me God. Amen.

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The day following the formal organization of the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Dublin, James Stephens and Thomas Clarke Luby, with whom Deneiffe had been in communication from the time of his first return from the United States, and to whom he bore a message from O'Mahony and Doheny, proceeded to Munster and were well received in Cork and Tipperary. In the south of Ireland there was already a secret organization which had been organized in Skibbereen, County Cork, in 1866. Its name was the Phoenix National and Literary Society. Stephens visited Skibbereen, and succeeded in getting several of the Phoenix men to become members of the new movement. In four months the southern part of Cork was organized and the enthusiasm spread to other Munster counties. In the words of Deneiffe, "Very soon the men of Munster were out nights on the hillsides and the lonely roads drilling." An expected remittance from America not having arrived, Stephens and Luby were obliged to return to Dublin for want of funds. Stephens visited America subsequently for the purpose of making arrangements with the leaders on this side of the Atlantic for more substantial financial

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assistance for the organization in Ireland.

The British Government at this time seems to have become aware of the existence of a secret conspiracy in the south of Ireland, and O'Donovan Rossa and other members of the Phoenix Society in Skibbereen were arrested, but were soon released, as no jury could be found to convict them.

In the spring of 1859 Stephens arrived in Paris from the United States, satisfied with the success of his American trip, having received promises that funds would be forthcoming regularly for organizing purposes in Ireland. In Paris Stephens was met by Luby and several other Irish leaders. The Irish Republican Brotherhood grew by leaps and bounds in 1861. The sending home, for interment in Ireland, of the remains of Terence Bellew McManus, one of the leaders of 1848, from California, where he died, and the public funeral processions when his body reached Cork and Dublin did more to arouse the spirit of Irish patriotism and increase the membership of the Irish Republican Brotherhood than any event which had yet taken place.

In the early years of Fenianism the press of Ireland was either antagonistic to the move-

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ment or feeble and timid, as it is to-day. The *Irishman*, which was edited by Denis Holland, was about the only paper in Ireland favorable to the Fenian cause. Considering it necessary to have an organ which would advocate the principles of Irish National Independence, the leaders of the Irish Republican Brotherhood decided to start a weekly newspaper. The *Irish People* accordingly commenced its career on November 28th, 1863, with John O'Leary in charge of the editorial department and Charles J. Kickham, Denis Dowling Mulcahy and Thomas Clarke Luby on the staff. Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa was business manager and James O'Connor, who some years later was elected a member of Parliament for one of the divisions of Wicklow, was bookkeeper.

By 1864 the I. R. B. had spread over Leinster and Munster, was fast gaining ground in Connacht, and had made fair progress in Ulster. John O'Leary, in his *Recollections*, says the chief difficulty in the way of progress in Connacht was the winning over of the Ribbonmen. "It was harder to make a Fenian of one of these," he says, "than of an Orangeman."

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The I. R. B. had not been long in existence when it was decided that advantage should be taken of the fact that there was a large number of Irish soldiers in the British garrison in Ireland. "Pagan" O'Leary was first detailed to introduce Fenianism into the British Army, and he succeeded in administering the Fenian oath to many Irishmen who were in the British military service. O'Leary was succeeded in this duty by William Roantree, whose place in turn was taken by John Devoy. The latter in the course of a series of articles on "Fenianism in the British Army" says:

The element of Fenianism which gave the movement its greatest hope of success from the military point of view, and made it most dangerous to England, was the organisation in the British army. Properly utilized it would have supplied Ireland with a large body of trained fighting men and correspondingly weakened and demoralized the forces of the enemy at the very outset of the contemplated insurrection.

In 1865 and the beginning of 1866 that organisation was still intact and could have been used to deal England a decisive blow. It would have supplied the nucleus of a trained army, under conditions more favorable to Ireland than had ever existed since the Anglo-Norman invasion. It was not utilized, and when, after many postponements, the shattered and broken movement

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undertook to strike, the organisation in the army was gone, its best men were in prison and the disaffected regiments scattered all over the British Empire.

There were in Ireland in 1865-6 about 26,000 British regular troops, and the militia, which was not under arms, because the Government dared not call it out, numbered about 16,000 men, of whom more than half were Fenians and all of the rest, except some of the Ulster regiments, of strongly Fenian sympathies. The Constabulary, then as now, a military force, numbered from 14,000 to 15,000 men. Considerably more than half the regular soldiers were Irishmen and fully 8,000 were sworn Fenians. In the whole British army there were fully 15,000 Fenians, and not less than 60 per cent. of the rank and file were Irish, including sons of Irishmen born in England and Scotland. At that time the latter were among the sturdiest Irishmen alive.

The officers of the British army were then even more incompetent than they proved themselves to be in the Boer War, and the regiments were really run by the Adjutants and the non-commissioned officers. There was a very large proportion of Irish sergeants, and hundreds of these were Fenians. Besides the men stationed in Ireland, many of the best Fenian regiments were at important strategic points in England. A Fenian at the War Office could not have placed them to greater advantage.

We had in Ireland at the close of 1865 about 160 American officers—Colonels, Captains and Lieutenants, who had gone through the Civil War, to say nothing of the hundreds of others who were ready to come over.

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Most of these were rough and ready men, who had only carried out orders, but several were men of unusual ability, who had commanded brigades and regiments in big battles and important operations. In the civilian organisation in Ireland and Great Britain there were several thousand ex-soldiers and fully 10,000 militiamen. Add to this the fact that in four poorly guarded Government arsenals in Ireland there were more than 100,000 Enfield rifles with ammunition and equipment, for the same number of men, and it will be seen that the means were at hand for the most formidable movement for Irish freedom with which England had ever had to deal.

On September 15, 1865, the *Irish People* newspaper was seized by the Government and the staff and many prominent members of the I. R. B. cast into prison. The British Government had made up its mind to cripple the organization by arresting its leaders. Stephens, despite the urgent appeals of many of the prominent men in the movement, kept on postponing the rising, while the Government continued to arrest the principal men of the organization.

Stephens, who undoubtedly was a great organizer, did not know how to use effectively the thousands of men who had been brought into Fenianism, and at a time when a bold stroke should have been made he indulged in



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a policy of hesitancy and procrastination. Shortly afterwards Stephens himself was arrested at Fairfield House, in the neighborhood of Dublin. His daring rescue from Richmond Bridewell by a band of armed Fenians, aided from the inside by John J. Breslin, hospital warder, and Daniel Byrne, a night watchman in the prison, sent a thrill of joy throughout Ireland and caused consternation in British Government circles. The rescue of Stephens occurred on November 24, 1865. He remained in Dublin in the house of a Mrs. Boland until March, 1866, when he left in disguise for France, and arrived safely in Paris.

Edward Duffy, of Castlerea, in the County Roscommon, succeeded Stephens as head of the I. R. B. He was in failing health, but went to work bravely to perform his duty. Later Colonel Thomas J. Kelly, who had been Chief of Staff under Stephens, came back from New York, assumed control of the organization, and gave it a new impetus.

How the men of the I. R. B., most of their leaders in prison, with scarcely any arms, ammunition or military supplies, rose on March 5th, 1867, and how the rising was speedily

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suppressed by the Government are matters of history. It had been originally intended to strike on February 11th, but the Fenian leaders finding that their plans had been betrayed to the Government by the informer Corydon, who had been giving the British authorities information since September, 1866, decided to postpone the insurrection. Colonel John J. O'Connor, in Kerry, not getting notice of the postponement, started the revolt there according to schedule, on February 11th, but after giving a big scare to the loyalists in that county and in the adjoining counties of Cork and Limerick he had to retreat into the mountains, and finding that the rising had been postponed, disbanded his forces.

The things which contributed chiefly to the failure of the I. R. B. in the 'sixties were the split in the Fenian Organization in the United States and Stephens' unwillingness to strike at the opportune time. In the United States the Fenian organization, instead of working as one harmonious body to support the men in Ireland, divided into two factions, one of which had for its object the invasion of Canada, while the second continued to support, as far as it could, the organization at home.

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Had the Fenian organization in America given its whole-hearted and undivided support to the men in Ireland the outcome of the movement for Irish Independence at that period might have been different. It is probable that Stephens was discouraged by the split in the United States and that under different circumstances he might have shown greater readiness to act, as the more vigorous spirits in the organization urged him to.

The I. R. B. from its inception has never gone out of existence. After what has been termed the failure of 1867, the work of reorganization was begun immediately. The I. R. B. was a tremendous force in Ireland up to the time of and during the early years of the Land League, and gave strength, leadership and backbone to that movement.

There are some notable differences between the uprising of 1867 and the more formidable revolt of 1916—previous to and after the 1867 outbreak a number of informers turned up, notably Corydon, Massey and Nagle. In 1916 the British Government seems to have had no definite information beforehand of the intended rebellion except that which was conveyed to them from the United States regard-



**ROGER DAVID CASEMENT**  
(As a Young Man)



**JOHN O'LEARY**



**AN IRISH VOLUNTEER OF  
1916 IN UNIFORM**

Three Generations of Rebels.

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ing the shipload of arms and ammunition which the Germans attempted to land on the Irish coast. Some Unionist leaders and others have tried to create the impression that the Government had advance information about the rising, but in reality all that was known to the British authorities beforehand was that conditions in Ireland had become critical. The public organization, the Irish Volunteers, evidently acted as a very effective screen for the work of the secret body, which really directed and inspired the revolt. The opposition of the clergy, too, which was so vigorous in the earlier years of Fenianism, and despite which the I. R. B. made wonderful progress numerically, did not manifest itself against the movement for Irish Independence which has come into world-wide prominence in 1916. The principles of the I. R. B. were never as well understood or as popular as they are in Ireland to-day, and the world never knew as it does now how brutally England governs there. Her firing squads, her gibbets, her jails, her malignity and her wiles have again failed to crush the love of liberty to which the Irish race has clung during more than seven centuries of outrage and oppres-

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sion. The torches which dropped from the dead hands of the Irish martyrs of 1916 have been taken up by others and relighted and the Irish nation keeps resolutely to the path along which the patriots and martyrs of the past have toiled and suffered during the long, dark and dreary centuries through which the people of Ireland have clung to their faith in ultimate freedom, inspired by their trust in the justice of God.

**JAMES REIDY.**

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**PART II**  
**PERSONALITIES AND IDEALS**



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## CHAPTER XV

PADRAIC PEARSE

(a) *Educationalist*

**T**HERE are hundreds of boys and young men and girls who will one day be able to say to their children and their children's children, "The Headmaster of my School died for Ireland." Nobody, perhaps, but an Irishman can realize how tremendous and inspiring that short statement will sound to those unborn generations.

A man who could have won fame and fortune at any of several things—he might have been a great lawyer, a great writer, or a great scholar—Pearse chose in his twenties to devote his life and his considerable fortune to founding a school for boys which would give them an education and an upbringing suitable for the needs of the country. He was not contented with the systems of education the State

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imposed upon Ireland. Both the primary and secondary systems of education had, in the main, the object of Anglicising the country, and some of the schools were succeeding—and are still, of course—in turning out passable imitation Englishmen and Englishwomen with imitation English manners and imitation English accents, though nothing really can impose an Anglo-Saxon civilization on the bulk of the people. They still retain every distinction of race, and the more educated they become the more intensely national are they, as witness the part played by University-bred men and women in the recent revolt. Pearse had been one of the most important workers in the Gaelic League, which had convinced the intelligence of the country that if we were to take our place amongst the nations of the earth we must have a distinctively national culture and we must be able to speak our own language. Pearse decided that the work he felt himself most suited for, viz., the founding of a bi-lingual secondary school for boys, was the best work he could do for Ireland.

Here it may be mentioned that although he was equally at home in both English and Irish

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his lasting literary work is in the Irish language.

He spent some years preparing himself for the work of the school; he studied bi-lingualism in Belgium and Holland and the latest methods of teaching foreign languages in various continental cities. Then in the summer of 1908 he acquired in Rathmines a large eighteenth century house with recreation fields and an old walled garden, and ensconcing himself there he announced in the newspapers that he was about to open a bi-lingual boarding and day school for boys. It was even a more daring undertaking than it looks on paper, because for generations all the Catholic Secondary Schools had been in the hands of Religious Orders and there were certain age-old prejudices against lay boarding-schools which, however, were more easily overcome by Pearse than by another.

Thomas MacDonagh, who was at that time teaching French in a school in Fermoy in County Cork, came and offered his long experience of boarding schools to Pearse, and so he became his second master. In addition there was a large staff of men and women of well-known scholastic attainments. Pearse

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brought out a carefully written prospectus, indicating the lines on which his school was to be run. He offered something new in educational ideas and his project was regarded with the greatest interest. In the first week of its opening his school was attended by about sixty boys—a very large number in Ireland for a new school. The house had beautiful surroundings and was inspiringlly decorated in a way to arouse the ambition and patriotism of boys. The walls were decorated with mural paintings of incidents from the lives of the great men of Ireland. A fresco in the entrance hall represented the boy Cuchullain donning arms for the first time. The Druid warns him that whoever takes up arms upon that day will have a short life, but a glorious one. Around the fresco was written in Old Irish the boy's reply, "I care not if my life have only the span of a night and a day if my deeds be spoken of by the men of Ireland." In addition to the school teaching staff Pearse arranged a series of half-holiday lectures, twice weekly, to be given by the best-known men and women in Ireland. His lecture-course contained the most famous names in literature, science and art. The school soon

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*Padraic Pearse*

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became a centre of the intellectual life of Ireland. He published occasionally a magazine, *An Macaomh*, which contained not only contributions from the boys and the teaching staff, but from well-known writers. Every year he produced a few plays which were acted by his staffs and his pupils. The most remarkable of these productions was a passion play, written in Irish by himself, which was acted in the Abbey Theatre by the pupils and staffs of his Boys' School, St. Enda's, and his Girls' School, St. Ita's. Part of the play was built on the Irish folk-tradition of the passion of Christ, and the whole production was so remarkable that many of the important English and Continental papers noticed it.

It would be impossible to imagine more inspiring or more wholesome surroundings for a child. Every manly sport was encouraged, and the school had a famous hurling-team which no other team could beat. In two years the number of boys who flocked to the school made it necessary for him to move into a larger house.

In the issue of *An Macaomh* for Christmas, 1909, he stated the ideas he was striving to propagate:

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All the problems with which we strive were long ago solved by our ancestors only their solutions have been forgotten. Take the problem of education, the problem, that is, of bringing up a child. We constantly speak and write as if a philosophy of education were first formulated in our own time. But all wise peoples of old faced and solved that problem for themselves, but most of their solutions were better than ours. Professor Culverwell thinks that the Jews gave it the best solution. For my part, I take off my hat to the old Irish. The philosophy of education is preached now, but it was practised by the founders of the Gaelic system two thousand years ago. Their very names for "education" and "teacher" and "pupil" show that they had gripped the heart of the problem. The word for "education" among the old Gaels was the same as the word for "fostering"; the teacher was a "fosterer" and the pupil was a "foster-child." Now "to foster" is exactly the function of a teacher: not primarily to "lead up," to "guide," to "conduct through a course of studies," and still less to "indoctrinate," to "inform," to "prepare for exams," but primarily to "foster" the elements of character already present. I put this another way in the first number of *An Macaomh* when I wrote that the true work of the teacher may be said to be to help the child to realise himself at his best and worthiest. One does not want to make each of one's pupils a replica of oneself (God forbid) holding the self-same opinions, prejudices, likes, illusions. Neither does one want to drill all one's pupils into so many regulation little soldiers or so many stodgy lit-

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tle citizens, though this is apparently the aim of some of the most cried-up of modern systems. The true teacher will recognize in each of his pupils an individual human soul, distinct and different from every other human soul that has ever been fashioned by God, miles and miles apart from the soul that is nearest and most akin to it, craving, indeed, comradeship and sympathy and pity, needing also it may be discipline and guidance and a restraining hand, but imperiously demanding to be allowed to live its own life, to be allowed to bring itself to its own perfection; because for every soul there is a perfection meant for it alone, and which it alone is capable of attaining. So the primary office of the teacher is to "foster" that of good which is native to the soul of his pupil, striving to bring its inborn excellences to ripeness rather than to implant in it excellences exotic to its nature. It comes to this then, that the education of a child is greatly a matter, in the first place, of congenial environment and, next to this, of a wise and loving watchfulness whose chief appeal will be to the finest instincts of the child itself. In truth, I think that the old Irish plan of education, as idealised for boys in the story of the Macradh of Emhain and for girls in that of the Gri-anan of Lusga, was the wisest and most generous that the world has ever known. The bringing together of children in some pleasant place under the fosterage of some man famous among his people for his greatness of heart, for his wisdom, for his skill in some gracious craft,—here we get the two things on which I lay most stress in education, the environment, and the stim-



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ulus of a personality which can address itself to the child's worthiest self. Then, the charter of free government within certain limits, the right to make laws and maintain them, to elect and depose leaders,—here was scope for the growth of individualities yet provision for maintaining the suzerainty of the common weal; the scrupulous co-relation of moral, intellectual and physical training, the open-air life, the very type of the games which formed so large a part of their learning,—all these things were designed with a largeness of view foreign to the little minds that devise our modern makeshifts for education. Lastly, the "aite," fosterer or teacher, had as colleagues in his work of fosterage no ordinary hirelings, but men whom their gifts of soul, or mind, or body, had lifted high above their contemporaries,—the captains, the poets, the prophets of their people.

Civilization has taken such a queer turn that it might not be easy to restore the old Irish plan of education in all its details. Our heroes and seers and scholars would not be so willing to add a Boy-Corps or a Gri-anan to their establishments as were their prototypes in Ireland from time immemorial till the fall of the Gaelic polity. I can imagine how blue Dr. Hyde, Mr. Yeats, and Mr. MacNeill would look if their friends informed them that they were about to send them their children to be fostered. But, at least, we can bring the heroes and seers and scholars to the schools (as we do at Sgoil Eanna) and get them to talk to the children; and we can rise up against the system which tolerates as teachers the rejected of all

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other professions rather than demanding for so priest-like an office the highest souls and noblest intellects of the race. I think, too, that the little child-republics I have described, with their own laws and their own leaders, their life face to face with nature, their care for the body as well as for the mind, their fostering of individualities yet never at the expense of the commonwealth, ought to be taken as models for all our modern schools. But I must not be misunderstood. In pleading for an attractive school-life, I do not plead for making school-life one long grand pic-nic: I have no sympathy with the sentimentalists who hold that we should surround children with an artificial happiness, shutting out from their ken pain and sorrow and retribution and the world's law of unending strife; the key-note of the school-life I desiderate is *effort* on the part of the child himself, struggle, self-sacrifice, self-discipline, for by these things only does the soul rise to perfection. I believe in gentleness, but not in softness. I would not place too heavy a burden on young shoulders, but I would see that no one, boy or man, shirk the burden he is strong enough to bear.

The sons and youthful relatives of the best-known Irishmen were now being educated there. To mention a few whose names will be recognized here in America—there were the nephews of George Moore (whose grandfather, by the way, was made President of Ireland by the French in 1798), the grandson of

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Dr. Sigerson, the children of Stephen Gwynn, of Eoin MacNeill and The O'Rahilly.

Pearse did not like to refuse admittance to any boy through want of space, so he felt obliged to acquire a house and grounds large enough to allow him to cope with the increasing number of boys. In 1910 he moved from Cullenswood House to the Hermitage in Rathfarnham—a house full of associations with Robert Emmet, Sarah Curran and with many incidents in eighteenth century Irish history. He then converted Cullenswood House into a school for girls. Taking over the Hermitage was a heavy undertaking, as a good deal of alteration was necessary to convert it into a school. The fact that he was unable to command the long credit for building operations given in Ireland to the schools managed by religious orders, considerably crippled his resources. He never really had enough money for the vastness of his undertaking, but with what capital he had he accomplished wonderful things. In this he was assisted by his mother and sisters, who managed the domestic side of the schools. Mrs. Pearse's running of the household expenditure was described by an expert who looked into her arrangements

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as a marvel of economic management. Pearse keenly realized what he owed to his mother and often said he dreaded the thought that in the natural course of events, her death would take place before his. He spent his last hours in writing her a poem that he knew would give her some consolation. And it was to her he wrote this last simple and beautiful letter:

KILMAINHAM PRISON, May 3rd.

MY DEAREST MOTHER:

I have been hoping up to now it would be possible to see you again, but it does not seem possible. Good-bye, dear, dear mother. Through you I say good-bye to "Wow Wow," (a sister), Mary, Brigid, Willie, Miss B., Miceal, cousin Maggine and everyone at St. Enda's. I hope and believe Willie<sup>1</sup> and the St. Enda boys will be all safe.

I have written two papers about financial affairs and one about my books which I want you to get. With them are a few poems which I want added to the poems in MS. in my bookcase. You asked me to write a little poem which would seem to be said by you about me. I have written it, and a copy is in Arbour Hill Barracks with other papers.

I just received holy communion. I am happy, except for the great grief of parting from you. This is the death I should have asked for if God had given me the choice of all deaths—to die a soldier's death for Ireland and for

<sup>1</sup>William Pearse was executed the next day.

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freedom. We have done right. People will say hard things of us now, but later on will praise us. Do not grieve for all this but think of it as a sacrifice which God asked of me and of you.

Good-bye again, dear mother. May God bless you for your great love for me and for your great faith, and may He remember all you have so bravely suffered. I hope soon to see papa, and in a little while we shall be all together again. I have not words to tell you of my love for you and how my heart yearns to you all. I will call to you in my heart at the last moment.

Your son PAT.

In another country a school like Pearse's would be endowed both by the State and by private philanthropy. In Ireland we can hardly be said to have a State, and the few people of large fortunes might endow a school for Anglicizing the country, but never one with this patriotic programme. About the time Pearse took up his quarters in the Hermitage his work was becoming well-known everywhere. In England, General Baden-Powell, who had founded the Boy Scout movement, was much impressed by what Pearse was accomplishing for Irish boys, and became eager to enroll in some way for his movement the help of this inspiring teacher of

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*Padraic Pearse*

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boys. Of course, no working scheme between Pearse and Baden-Powell was feasible, but it is worth mentioning as showing the attention St. Enda's School was attracting.

The school lasted in all from September, 1908, until the first week of May, 1916, when its founder was placed before a firing squad of eight soldiers, four of whom aimed at his head and four at his heart; the heart that had loved Ireland and the boys of Ireland so much, and the fine brain that had planned such great things were riddled with bullets.

He was a great man, though his greatness was rarely apparent at first acquaintance. He had the curious aloofness and reserve of the educated Irish. He was rarely seen at social gatherings; when he was, his tall, strongly-built figure with its stooping head and slightly-squinting eager eyes was the figure of a man of destiny. In conversation he was gentle and shy, only in the presence of large masses of people did he really become himself. Then he became imperious and masterful, and his strength and passion were sometimes overwhelming. He was the finest orator I have ever heard, though his oratory was not of the kind common amongst the Irish members of

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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the House of Commons and in many Irish-American gatherings, and which is known as *rameis* in Ireland. Everything Pearse said was charged with meaning, and took root in the heads and hearts of the people. He never worked up his audience into tears about the past woes of Ireland; he made them passionately eager to struggle for the future. Thus, he dominated that generation of University-bred men and women in Ireland who have risked so much and accomplished so much. I can easily understand how, when the choice of President of the Republic had to be taken, all minds and eyes turned to him. He is still in the minds of the people their President, though the soldiers threw his shot-riddled body, coffinless into a pit, and covered it with corroding lime, so that we can never recover it, to pay it our homage.

MARY M. COLUM.

*Formerly member of St. Ita's Teaching Staff.*

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*Padraic Pearse*

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*(b) The Poet*

At break of day I chanced to stray where Seine's fair  
waters glide,  
When to raise my heart, young Bonaparte, came forward  
for to ride;  
On a field of green, with gallant mien, he formed his men  
in square,  
And down the line, with looks divine, he rode the Oul'  
Grey Mare.

Can't you hear some blind ballad-singer  
trolling out these lines at an Irish coun-  
try fair? And if you found them in a collec-  
tion of anonymous Irish street-songs, would  
you not pronounce them authentic? But the  
lines were written by Padraic Pearse to em-  
body a fragment of a genuine traditional song.

In a characteristic Irish way, using the fig-  
ure of a grey mare as other Irish ballads on  
the Napoleonic legend use the figures of a  
bunch of roses or a green linnet, the original  
seems to have lamented the eclipse of the Na-  
poleonic cause and prophesied its triumph.  
Padraic Pearse's re-construction was typical



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of the illiterate ballad-maker's productions.  
It went on:

My sporting boys that's tall and straight, take counsel and  
be wise;  
Attention pay to what I say, my lecture don't despise;  
Let patience guide *yous* everywhere, and from traitors now  
beware,  
For none but *min* that's sound within can ride my Oul'  
Grey Mare!

Now Bonaparte on her did start, he rode too fast, *Is*  
*Truagh* (Alas!)  
She lost a shoe at Moscow fair, and got lamed at Wa-  
terloo;  
But wait till she comes back again where she'll have far-  
rier's care,  
And the very next *hate*, she'll win the plate, my sporting  
Oul' Grey Mare!

The last stanza was the genuine relique.  
Padraic Pearse was devoted to the memory of  
the Corsican and one of his cherished posses-  
sions was a lock of hair said to be Napoleon's.  
He used to say—"Hold your breath now while  
I'm showing you this." I remember being with  
him in the Abbey Theatre and seeing him read  
during the intervals a book called "The Cor-

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*Padraic Pearse*

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sican" that was made up of extracts from the diaries, proclamations and despatches of Napoleon. He reminded me that in the beginning Napoleon was the ardent lover of a poor and unhappy motherland. "He took the bribe and went over to the big country," I said. "Yes," said Pearse, "Napoleon the patriot let himself be bribed with glory."

I began with "At break of day I chanced to stray" because it shows a characteristic side of Padraic Pearse—a side, too, that may come to be overlooked. He understood popular tradition so well that he could make verse that would pass for the anonymous creations of the folk. It was really a delight to hear him repeat the old ballads that he knew. He seemed to like best the ones that brought him to an unusual exuberance—extravagant pieces that were kept in bounds by his gravity. He used to recite "Shamus O'Brien" and "Paudraugh Croohoore" splendidly. I can remember his doing "Paudraugh Croohoore" at an entertainment in his school. I have even a better recollection of his doing it at a friend's house. He sat in a chimney-corner, and in a deep voice and with the heavy, occasional gestures of an

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old shanachie he recited the same long, vigorous and extravagant ballad:

Now Paudraugh Croohoore was the broth of a boy,  
He stood six foot eight;  
His arm was as thick as another man's thigh—  
Sure Paudraugh was great!

He was one of the first of his generation to become enthusiastic about the propaganda of the Gaelic League. When he wrote about the President of the Gaelic League, Dr. Douglas Hyde, in 1913, he said, "I have served under him since I was a boy. I am willing to serve under him until he can lead and I can serve no longer. I have never failed him. He has never failed me. I am only one of the many who could write thus. But probably my service has been longer than that of most, for it began when I was only sixteen; and perhaps it has been more intimate than that of all but a very few, for I have been in posts that required constant communication with him for fifteen years." He made himself fluent in Gaelic by living for long spaces of time in one of the poorest parishes of West Connacht. He loved Connacht and its Gaelic-speaking people—especially the children. He wrote his

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*Padraic Pearse*

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most intimate poems in the language they spoke. How deeply he entered into the life of the Connacht cabin is shown in one of the poems he wrote in Irish—"The Lullaby of the Woman of the Mountain"—which has been translated by Thomas MacDonagh. "The monotonous repetition of the one rhyme throughout," says MacDonagh, speaking of the original in his fine book, "Literature in Ireland," "and the swaying flow of the verse help to make this poem a perfect lullaby."

O little head of gold! O candle of my house!  
Thou wilt guide all who travel this country.

Be quiet, O house! And O little grey mice,  
Stay at home to-night in your hidden lairs!

O moths on the window, fold your wings!  
Stay at home to-night, O little black chafers!

O plover and O curlew, over my house do not travel!  
Speak not, O barnacle-geese, going over the mountain  
here!

O creatures of the mountain, that wake so early  
Stir not to-night till the sun whitens over you.

His single book of poems, "Suantraidhe agus Goltraidhe" (Songs of Sleep and of Sorrow), was published in 1914. MacDonagh in

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his survey of the new Gaelic literature said: "One need not ask if it be worth while having such books of poetry. The production of this is already a success for the new literature."

He has made reference to the people of Connacht and to their children in one of the two poems he wrote just before his execution. The poem I speak of is in English, and has come to us unrevised:

#### THE WAYFARER

The beauty of this world hath made me sad;  
This beauty that will pass;  
Sometimes my heart hath shaken with great joy,  
To see a leaping squirrel in a tree,  
Or a red ladybird upon a stalk,  
Or little rabbits in a field at evening,  
Lit by a staring sun;  
On some green hill, where shadows drifting by,  
Some quietude, where mountainy men have sown  
And some would reap, near to the gate of Heaven;  
Or children with bare feet  
Upon the sands of some ebb'd sea,  
Or playing in the streets of little towns in Connacht—  
Things young and happy,  
And then my heart hath told me  
These will pass  
Will pass and change, will die and be no more,  
Things bright and green, things young and happy,  
And I have gone upon my way—sorrowful!

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*Padraic Pearse*

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The manuscript was not quite clear, and the transcription is possibly incorrect in lines 9 and 10. However, a French translation, probably made from a better manuscript appeared in the *Mercure de France* of July. The translation is by Madame Gonne:

LE VOYAGEUR

La beauté de ce monde m'a rendu triste,  
Cette beauté qui passera.  
Des fois, mon cœur a tremblé de grande joie  
A voir un écureuil sauter sur une branche,  
Une coccinelle rouge sur une tige,  
De petits lapins dans un champ, le soir  
Sous le soleil couchant,  
Une colline verte où les ombres passent,  
Quelque solitude où des hommes de la montagne  
Ont semé  
Ou bien récoltent, près des portes du Ciel,  
Des enfants pieds nus sur le sable  
D'une mer retirée,  
Ou jouant dans les rues d'une petite ville de Connacht.  
Toutes choses jeunes et heureuses.  
Et puis mon cœur m'a dit:  
Tout cela passera,  
Passera et changera, mourra, ne sera plus.  
Des choses belles et vertes, des choses jeunes et heureuses.  
Et j'ai poursuivi mon chemin, tristement.

It is not necessary now to review Padraic Pearse's public career. He was a barrister-

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at-law and in his early twenties he became editor of the Gaelic League organ, *An Claidreamh Soluis*. He conducted this journal with vigor and judgment, writing weekly articles in Irish and English, and devoting particular attention to educational problems. In order to study bi-lingual methods of education he spent some time in Belgium and Holland. He left the office of *An Claidreamh Soluis* eight years ago to take up a daring enterprise—the founding of a secondary school where the education given would be really Irish and national: education that would be bi-lingual in its methods and Gaelic in its atmosphere.

After he founded St. Enda's he connected nearly all his literary efforts with the schools. One year he wrote words for an heroic pageant, another year he wrote a miracle play to be acted by the children; a third year he wrote a Passion Play that was produced by the pupils and the staffs of his boys' and girls' schools, St. Enda's and St. Ita's. In 1913 he made a tour in the United States and lectured on Gaelic literature. On his return to Ireland he intervened in political affairs with the publication of a series of articles in the Separatist journal, *Irish Freedom*.

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*Padraic Pearse*

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The first series of his articles, June, 1913, to January, 1914, were published last year in a pamphlet with the title "From a Hermitage." These were written when the Ulster Volunteers were arming, but before the Nationalists had organised their volunteers. In the foreword written a year afterwards he declares that the articles were written with a deliberate intention—"by argument, invective and satire, of goading those who shared my political views to commit themselves definitely to an armed movement." Only extracts from this pamphlet can give an idea of its gay and deliberate commitment to dangerous courses. It might be a chapter from some Irish book with a Nietzschean title—"The Rosy Dawn," or "Thoughts out of Season."

Upon the dragon-fly a literature might be written. The dragon-fly is one of the most beautiful and terrible things in nature. It flashes by you like a winged emerald or ruby or turquoise. Scrutinise it at close quarters and you will find yourself comparing its bulky little round head, with its wonderful eyes and its cruel jaws, to the beautiful cruel head of a tiger. The dragon-fly among insects is in fact as the tiger among beasts, as the hawk among birds, as the shark among fish, as the lawyer among men, as England among the nations. It is the destroyer, the cater-up, the cannibal. Two dragon-flies will fight



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until nothing remains but two heads. So ferocious an eater-up is the dragon-fly that it is said that, in the absence of other bodies to eat up, it will eat up its own body until nothing is left but the head, and it would doubtless eat its own head if it could; a feat which would be as remarkable as the feat of the saint, recorded by Carlyle and recalled by Mitchel, who swam across the channel carrying his decapitated head in his teeth. The dragon-fly is the type of greedy ascendancy—a sinister head preying upon its own vitals. The largest and most wonderful dragon-flies I have seen in Ireland haunt the lovely woods that fringe the shores of Lough Corrib, near Cong. And at Cong, I remember, there is a great lord who has pulled down many homes that no ascending smoke may mar the sylvan beauty of his landscape.

. . . . .

Poverty, starvation, social unrest, crime are incidental to the civilization of such states as England and America, where immense masses of people are herded in great Christless cities and the bodies and souls of men are exploited in the interests of wealth. But these conditions do not to any extent exist in Ireland. We have not great cities; we have hardly any ruthless capitalists exploiting immense masses of men. Yet in Ireland we have dire and desperate poverty; we have starvation; we have social unrest. Ireland is capable of feeding twenty million people; we are barely four million. Why do so many of us starve? Before God, I believe that the root of the matter lies in foreign domination. A free Ireland would not, and could not, have hunger in her fertile vales and squalor in her cities. Ireland has resources to feed five

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*Padraic Pearse*

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times her population: a free Ireland would make those resources available. A free Ireland would drain the bogs, would harness the rivers, would plant the wastes, would nationalise the railways and waterways, would improve agriculture, would protect fisheries, would promote commerce, would foster industries, would diminish extravagant expenditure (as on needless judges and policemen), would beautify the cities, would educate the workers (and also the non-workers, who stand in dire need of it), would, in short, govern herself as no external power—nay, not even a government of angels and arch-angels—could govern her. For freedom is the condition of sane life, and in slavery, if we have no death, we have the more evil thing which the poet has named Death-in-Life. The most awful wars are the wars that take place in dead or quasi-dead bodies when the fearsome things that death breeds go forth to prey upon one another and upon the body that is their parent.

. . . . .  
Keating (whom I take to be the greatest of Irish Nationalist poets) used a terrific phrase of the Ireland of his day: he called her "the harlot of England." Yet Keating's Ireland was the magnificent Ireland in which Rory O'Moore planned and Owen Roe battled. What would he say of this Ireland? His phrase if used to-day would no longer be a terrible metaphor, but would be a more terrible truth; a truth literal and exact. For is not Ireland's body given up to the pleasure of another, and is not Ireland's honor for sale in the market-place?

. . . . .  
My priest on my desert island spoke to me glowingly

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about the Three who died at Manchester. He spoke to me too of the rescue of Kelly and Deasy from the prison van and of the ring of armed Fenians keeping the Englishry at bay. I have often thought that that was the most memorable moment in recent Irish history: and that that ring of Irishmen spitting fire from revolver barrels, while an English mob cowered out of range, might well serve as a symbol of the Ireland that should be; of the Ireland that shall be. Next Sunday we shall pay homage to them and to their deed; were it not a fitting day for each of us to resolve that we too will be men?

Padraic Pearse might have been Ireland's great Catholic writer—not in the sectarian sense that the word is used in English-speaking countries, but in the philosophic sense that it is understood in Europe. Ireland has badly needed writers that would be trained in the severe Catholic philosophy and mellowed in the ancient Catholic culture and would have a touch of the heroic impulse of the missionary saints. Padraic Pearse shows himself such a writer in the little pamphlet, "From a Hermitage." He has spoken of Wolfe Tone, John Mitchel, Thomas Davis and Fintan Lalor as being the four Evangelists of Irish Nationalism. Had a more cultured Lalor written for a more cultured circle we might com-

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*Padraic Pearse*

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pare Pearse's political writings to his—they are like Lalor's in the epistolary directness of their style and in their power of making talismanic phrases.

PADRAIC COLUM.

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## CHAPTER XVI

ROGER DAVID CASEMENT

(a) *The Man*

**I**T was back in 1905 that I first met Roger Casement, soon after his return from the Congo, where, at the risk of life and reputation, he had laboured to accumulate evidence of the infernal tortures which the rubber companies whose head was the King of the Belgians, were inflicting on the natives. An acute controversy was going on at the time over Casement's revelations, and his vivid personality came in for much discussion. I do not remember that even the most bitter of his enemies had a word to say against his character.

Casement until just before his death was an Ulster Protestant, born in County Antrim in 1864. The place where I met him in his native county was a proper



**ROGER DAVID CASEMENT**  
**(At the Time of His Trial)**

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*Roger David Casement*

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background for one destined to stand on the gallows and answer for his part in asserting his country's right to political independence. It was Ardrigh, the home of Mr. Francis Joseph Biggar, another Ulster Protestant whose devotion to Gaelic tradition has been conspicuous. The house stands on the lower slopes of Cave Hill, where in 1795 Wolfe Tone, Samuel Neilson and Thomas Russell bound themselves by oath to pursue the cause of Irish independence. I knew little at the time of Casement's interest in the Irish question. I had heard that he was a Home Ruler, but that was all; and that may have been why at first sight he did not recall to me those apostles of militant nationalism so much as he did the buccaneers of the Spanish main. There was an inescapable suggestion of romance about him; one said at once a man in whose life sentiment must play a large part; but it became quickly evident that the heart's passion was regulated, not dominated, by a subtle and ironic intellect.

Casement was standing on the steps of Ardrigh that quiet, sunny morning when I saw him first. He had a cigarette in his hand, and the tall, lithe figure was relaxed. His air



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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was courtly, full of an unforgettable graciousness. With that relaxation there was unquestionable evidence of the lissome, swift strength and poise which, in our everyday imagery, we call panther-like. It was a subtle quality not always certainly distinguishable from dilettantism, yet how tragic would have been the suspicion of the more ignoble quality in one who was to decree for himself so chivalrous and self-abnegatory a destiny! Casement was reserved, almost shy, greatly tolerant; and when he spoke in those low, musical, kindly tones, without a trace of arrogance, though with a great deal of self-consciousness, one established him in one's mind and heart as an honorable gentleman, a poet, an idealist, that kind of idealist who, with an intellect which pierces the sham and hypocrisy of life's ordinary shibboleths, refuses the cowardly refuge of cynicism and, with a full knowledge and gentle relish of human weaknesses, says that if we must fail we had better fail in striving for the highest, but that it is never certain we must fail. I felt sure that Casement hated the compromise of ordinary politics too much ever to get the best out of them, and therein would be his weakness as a national leader. But as

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*Roger David Casement*

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an inspiration—well, it was clear that his ship would always be steered towards truth, with her sails bellying out in the twin winds of courage and chivalry.

I soon found out that he was a Separatist. Neither in public nor in private did he conceal it. He was greatly concerned to stop the drainage of Irish manhood into the British army. But the Government took no notice of these opinions and activities. He was rendering excellent service as a consul, and his political dreams were regarded as too visionary to be of serious account.

Casement had come to Ardrigh to pull himself together before undergoing an operation in Belfast. I remember how anxious he was that his illness should not be made known. It was not merely that he had a Greek love of health, but that he hated publicity. This hatred of publicity was such that when he was arrested after landing from the German submarine his name was comparatively little known throughout Ireland. Yet for over a decade he had been active at home and abroad in movements designed to better Irish conditions. His work a few years back for the starving peasants of Connemara gained him

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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a local fame, and the resources of a purse none too fat were drawn upon to build a new wing for a college in Donegal devoted to the teaching of Irish. His generosity was proverbial.

Casement was one of those men whose aloofness of spirit makes them deferential to their fellow-men. His soul lived in a lonesome place. He would listen tolerantly to whatever anyone might say, but I greatly doubt if any man's opinion but his own ever influenced his major actions. Those who consider that his tropical experiences made a madman of Roger Casement know very little of him. The root of his madness lay far deeper, in a great sympathy for human suffering, in a proud gospel of individualism, in an incorrigible conviction that no civilised race should be compelled to endure alien domination. One can imagine that British apologists would resent the word "alien"—one has heard learned biologists prove that there is no such thing as a distinct Irish race. Unfortunately it is not biologists who have to settle political difficulties. What matters is that there is a distinct Irish mentality, and in the particular instance Roger Casement was a very excellent example of it.

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### *Roger David Casement*

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Casement was always on the side of the weak from the time when he closed his boyhood career as a purser on an Elder Dempster boat and entered His Majesty's service under the ægis of Sir Claude MacDonnell. His earliest consular work was done in the wilds of Africa, and his success with the primitive peoples inhabiting there was remarkable. No doubt his distinguished appearance impressed the elemental natives, but his success may still more probably be attributed to his adaptable Irish intelligence, his resourcefulness and his quick sympathy. His abiding love of children, always a lovable trait, may also have helped him to reach those childlike natures. Those who came back from Africa brought stories of exploits that must have left his name a brilliant legend there. I remember hearing how once, when his coolies refused to ford a river which was infested with crocodiles, Casement went further up the bank and, plunging in alone, swam the four hundred odd yards across. Then his coolies followed him. And there is the story of his appearance before a native king with whom it was desirable to negotiate a treaty. The king received the consul agreeably, but soon it was

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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noised about that the women of the tribe had fallen under the "evil eye" of the white man. Casement was equal to the occasion; by a weird conglomeration of suddenly invented magic he exorcised the too sensitive females in the royal presence! Once Queen Victoria, thinking the dignity of her consul would be improved by a glittering uniform, wrote him to that effect. Casement replied by sending a photo of himself in the only uniform, he said, he needed. The imperial eyes in due time, never very famous for their humor, had an opportunity of judging whether a sun helmet, a loin cloth and a pair of sand shoes were adequate trappings for an emissary of empire.

Casement was consul for South-west Africa at St. Paul de Loanda during the Boer War, and the ultra-Imperialists considered him a pro-Boer. If they meant that the destruction of those two brave nationalities was hateful to him they were right, even though Casement never forgave the Boers their cruel treatment of the natives. But if they meant that he was not loyal to his consular oath, they were wrong. No man in its service could have given the British Government more loyal returns than Casement did. Not easily amenable to dis-

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### *Roger David Casement*

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cipline, he had to work in his own way. Impatient of mediocrity he neither could nor did always conceal his contempt for his superiors; to one of them he is said to have refused to speak for three years. He did not care for some posts that were ordinarily sought for in the service—he refused Lisbon, doubtless because it was not picturesque enough. His fearless work in connection with the Putumayo rubber atrocities rivalled what he had done in the Congo; his evidence as to conditions in the consular service gained him official thanks; he finally retired after he had served as consul-general at Rio, and was pensioned. He was made a knight in 1911. The honor was unsought and only urgent private reasons made him accept it.<sup>1</sup>

So restless a spirit could not rest. Casement soon became one of the prominent leaders of the Irish Volunteers; his apologia for that ac-

<sup>1</sup> Casement had been made a C.M.G. several years previously. He had even been received in private audience by King Edward. I remember asking Casement how the King had impressed him. He said: "He is an ideal king for the English; he has all the tact of a small shopkeeper." Casement's knighthood was withdrawn on his conviction of high treason and while his appeal was pending.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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tion may be found elsewhere in this book, in his speech from the dock. At the outbreak of the war he was in America; from there he went to Germany. And from Germany he went back to Ireland with a price on his head, to fall into the hands of the authorities, as is related elsewhere, and to stand his trial for high treason.<sup>1</sup>

It has been said that Casement was in the pay of Germany, but the British authorities have never made that charge specifically. Casement himself indignantly denied it in open court. When he forfeited the pension his consular service had earned, he and his work were supported and carried on with Irish money. When in Germany he endeavoured to form an Irish Brigade from the Irish prisoners taken in the great war, but he failed. He endeavoured also to get from the Kaiser a declaration that in the event of German victory Ireland would not be overrun. In this—for whatever it was worth—he was successful.

Between August, 1911, and December,

<sup>1</sup> It has been stated on good authority that Casement returned to Ireland to stop the rebellion and not to foment it, that he was really responsible for MacNeill's countermanding order.

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*Roger David Casement*

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1913, as he tells us himself, Casement wrote a remarkable series of articles "without any thought of publication." They foreshadowed the occurrence of the great war clearly, laying the blame for it on British navalism, and they were a plea for a closer union between Ireland and the continent of Europe. In them Casement showed clearly, what Gladstone saw, that if Ireland, instead of lying to the west of England, lay between her and the continent, her autonomy would long ago have been secured. And he held, too, that so long as England was immune from invasion so long would she be indifferent to the worst horrors of war and, as a consequence, remain a menace to the peace of the world. In March, 1913, he wrote:

That war of the seas is inevitable. It may be fought on a Continent; it may be waged in the air—it must be settled on the seas and it must mean either the freeing of those seas or the permanent exclusion of Europeans from the affairs of the world. It means for Europe the future, the very existence of European civilisation as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon world-dominion. In that war Germany will stand not alone as the champion of Europe, she will fight for the freedom of the world.

As an Irishman, I have no fear of the result to Ireland from a German triumph. I pray for it; for with



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the coming of that day the "Irish Question," so dear to British politicians, becomes a European, a world question.

With the humbling of Great Britain and the destruction of her sea ownership, European civilisation assumes a new stature, and Ireland, oldest and yet youngest of the European peoples, shall enter into free partnership with the civilisation, culture, and prosperity that that act of liberation shall bring to mankind.

In these polemical writings, Casement displays wit, satire and eloquence to an unusual degree; as efforts of special pleading they are in the best tradition of political pamphleteering, the tradition which brings such documents out of an impassioned sense of public duty. They do not comprise all his literary effort; he wrote a good deal of verse which shows a fine sensibility and a thorough acquaintance with the finest culture. But it was his passion for human freedom that in this field, too, brought forth his most distinguished effort. There are not many sonnets in the English language finer than his "Hamilcar Barca":

Thou that didst mark from Heincte's spacious hill  
The Roman spears, like mist, uprise each morn,  
Yet, held, with Hesper's shining point of scorn,  
Thy sword unsheathed above Panormus still;  
Thou that wert leagued with naught but thine own will,

### *Roger David Casement*

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Eurythmic vastness to that stronghold torn  
From foes above, below, where, though forlorn,  
Thou still hadst claws to cling and beak to kill—  
Eagle of Eryx!—When the Aegatian shoal  
Rolled westward all the hopes that Hanno wrecked,  
With mighty wing, unwearying, didst thou  
Seek far beyond the wolf's grim protocol,  
Within the Iberian sunset faintly specked,  
A rock where Punic faith should bide its vow.

Politics in the last analysis is only the science of filling the national pot and boiling it. Roger Casement was no politician. During these last sad months I have often pictured those magnetic eyes of his wandering with illimitable spirit over the limited walls of his cell; in them was the certain faith of the German mystic who said that "the night time of the body is the day time of the soul." He became a Roman Catholic while in prison.

He is dead, this Knight of the Flaming Heart, hanged by the neck with a rope manipulated by a Rochdale barber, while the cheers of a Cockney crowd broke blasphemously through his last litany. I said that his ship would always be steered towards truth, with her sails bellying out in the twin winds of courage and chivalry. And so it proved. Too

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often at the helm of such a ship sentimentality postures pathetically; it is not possible to speak of sentimentality in the case of one who, with a smile scornful of punitive death, laid down his life for his sentiment.

MAURICE JOY.

#### *(b) The Speech from the Dock*

Sir Roger Casement was found guilty of high treason and sentenced to death by the Lord Chief Justice of England at 4:30 o'clock on the afternoon of the 29th June, 1916. He heard the verdict and sentence without flinching. A smile, says the newspaper account, was playing about his face when the foreman of the jury pronounced the fateful word, "Guilty."

The jury had retired at 2:55 o'clock and returned at 3:48. Two minutes later Sir Roger began his famous valedictory.

#### *My Lord Chief Justice:*

There is objection—possibly not good in law, but surely good on moral grounds—against the application to me here of this English statute, five hundred and sixty-five years old, that seeks to deprive an Irishman of to-day of life and honor, not for "adhering to the King's enemies," but for adhering to his own people.

### *Roger David Casement*

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Being tried, in truth, not by my peers of the life present, but by fears of the dead past; not by civilisation of the twentieth century, but by the brutality of the fourteenth; not even by a statute framed in the language of the land that tries me, but emitted in the language of an enemy land—so antiquated is the law that must be sought to-day to slay an Irishman whose offence is that he puts Ireland first.

Loyalty is sentiment, not law. It rests on love, not restraint. The government of Ireland, by England, rests on restraint, not love; and since it demands no love, it can evoke no loyalty.

But this statute is more absurd even, than it is antiquated; if it be potent to hang one Irishman, it is still more potent to gibbet all Englishmen.

Edward III. was King not only of the realm of England, but also of the realm of France, and he was not the King of Ireland. Yet his dead hand to-day may pull the noose around an Irishman's neck, whose sovereign he was not, although it can strain no strand around a Frenchman's throat, whose sovereign he was.

For centuries the successors of Edward III. claimed to be the Kings of France, and quartered the arms of France on their royal shield down to the union with Ireland on January 1, 1801.

Did the "Kings of France" resident here in Windsor or the Tower of London hang, draw and quarter as a traitor every Frenchman for four hundred years who fell into their power with arms in their hands?

To the contrary, they received the embassies of these traitors, presents from these traitors, even knighthood it-

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self at the hands of these traitors, feasted with them, tilted with them, fought them—but did not assassinate them by law!

The judicial assassination of to-day was reserved for one race of the King's subjects—for the Irishmen; for those who cannot forget their allegiance to the realm of Ireland.

The Kings of England, as such, had no rights in Ireland up to the time of Henry VIII. save such as rested on the contract of mutual obligation entered into between them and certain princes, chiefs and lords of Ireland. This form of legal right, such as it was, gave no King of England the lawful power to impeach an Irishman for high treason under this statute of King Edward III.

And what is the fundamental charter of an Englishman's liberty? That he be tried by his peers.

With all respect, I assert that this court is to me—an Irishman charged with this offence—a foreign court; this jury is for me—an Irishman—not a jury of my peers, to try me in this vital issue, for it is patent to every man's conscience that it is his indefeasible right, if tried at all, under this statute for high treason, that he be tried in Ireland before an Irish court and by an Irish jury.

But for the Attorney-General of England there is only "England"—there is no Ireland and there is only the law of England—no right in Ireland; the liberty of Ireland and Irishmen is begrudged by the power of England.

Yet for me, an Irish outlaw, there is a land of Ireland, a right in Ireland, and a charter for all Irishmen to

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appeal to as a last resort; a charter that even the very statutes of England cannot deprive us of—nay, more, a charter that the Englishmen themselves assert as the fundamental bone of the law connecting the two kingdoms.

To Englishmen I set no evil example, for I made no appeal to them. I asked no Englishman to help me. I asked Irishmen to fight for their rights.

If I did wrong in making that appeal to Irishmen to join me in an effort to fight for Ireland, it is by Irishmen, and them alone, that I can be rightfully judged.

From this court and its jurisdiction I appeal to those whom I am alleged to have wronged, and those whom I am alleged to have injured by my "evil example," and claim that they alone are competent to decide my guilt or innocence.

It was not I who landed in England, but the Crown who dragged me here, away from my own country to which I returned with a price upon my head; away from my own countrymen, whose loyalty was not in doubt, and safe from the judgment of my peers, whose judgment I do not shrink from.

I admit no other judgment but theirs. I accept no verdict except at their hands.

I assert from this dock that I am being tried here not because it is just, but because it is unjust. Place me before a jury of my own countrymen, be it Protestant, Catholic, Unionist, Nationalist, Sinn Feinach or Orangemen, and I shall accept the verdict and bow to the statute and all its penalties.

If they adjudge me guilty, then I am guilty.

It is not I who am afraid of their verdict; it is the

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Crown. If this is not so, why fear the test? I fear it not, but demand it as my right!

I would add that the generous expressions of sympathy extended to me from so many quarters, particularly in America, have touched me very much. In that country, as in mine, I am sure my motives are understood—for the achievement of their liberties has been an abiding inspiration to Irishmen and all elsewhere rightly struggling to be free.

I hope to be acquitted of presumption if I say that the court I seek now is not this High Court of Justice of England, but the far greater, far higher and far older assemblage of justice—of the people of Ireland.

Since in the acts which led to this trial, it was the people of Ireland I sought to serve—and them alone—I leave my judgment and sentence in their hands.

Ireland has outlived the failure of all her hopes—yet she still hopes. Ireland has seen her sons, aye, and her daughters, suffer from generation to generation, always for the same cause, meeting always the same fate, always at the hands of the same power, and always a fresh generation has passed on to withstand the same oppression.

A cause that begets this indomitable faculty, preserving it through centuries of misery and the remembrance of lost liberty—this surely is the noblest cause men ever strove for, ever lived for, ever died for!

My counsel referred to the Ulster Volunteer movement. Neither I nor any leaders of the Irish Volunteers founded in Dublin in November, 1913, had any quarrel with the Ulster Volunteers, as such, who were born a year earlier.

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We aimed at winning Ulster Volunteers to the cause of a united Ireland. It was not we Irish Volunteers who broke the law, but the British party. The Government permitted the Ulster Volunteers to be armed by Englishmen; to threaten not merely the English party in its hold on office, but to threaten that party through the lives and blood of Irishmen.

The battle was to be fought in Ireland in order that the political "Outs" to-day should be the "Ins" to-morrow in Great Britain. The law to benefit Ireland was to be met, not on the floor of Parliament, where the fight could indeed be won, but on a field of battle much nearer home, where the armies were to be composed of Irishmen slaying each other for some English party's gain.

The British navy was to be chartered "transports" that were bringing to our shores numerous assemblages of military and ex-military experts in the congenial and profitable business of holding down the subjects of the populations abroad.

Our choice lay in submitting to foreign lawlessness or resisting it, and we did not hesitate to choose.

The manifesto of the Irish Volunteers promulgated at a public meeting in Dublin on November 25, 1913, stated with sincerity the aims of the organization as I outlined them.

The Government that permitted the arming of those whose leaders declared that Irish national unity was a thing that should be opposed by force of arms, within nine days after the issue of our manifesto of good will to Irishmen of every creed and class took steps to nullify our



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effort by prohibiting the importation of arms into Ireland as if it were a hostile, blockaded coast.

Since lawlessness sat in high places in England and laughed at the law as a custodian's law, what wonder that Irishmen refuse to accept the verbal protestations of England's Lord Chancellor as a sufficient safeguard for their lives and liberties?

I, for one, was determined Ireland was much more to me than the "Empire," and if charity begins at home, so must loyalty. Since arms were so necessary to make our organisation a reality, it was our bounden duty to get arms before all else.

I decided, with this end in view, to go to America, with surely a better right to appeal to Irishmen there for help in the hour of our great national trial than those envoys of the "Empire" could assert for their week-end descents on Ireland or their appeals to Germany.

Within a few weeks of my arrival in the States a fund that had been opened to secure arms for the volunteers in Ireland amounted to many thousands of pounds. In every case the money subscribed, whether it came either from the purse of wealthy men or the still readier pocket of the poor man, was Irish gold.

Then came the war. As Mr. Birrell said, "The war has upset all our calculations."

It upset mine none the less than Mr. Birrell's and put an end to my mission and peaceful efforts in America.

We had seen the working of the Irish Constitution in the refusal of the army of occupation at the Curragh to obey the orders of the Crown. Now that we were told we ought to enter that army in return for a promissory

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note (payable after death), a scrap of paper that might or might not be redeemed, I felt that in America my first duty was to keep Irishmen at home in the only army that could safeguard our national existence.

If the small nationalities were to be the pawns in this game of embattled giants, I saw no reason why Ireland should shed her blood in any cause but her own, and if that be treason beyond the seas I am not ashamed to avow it or to answer for it here with my life.

The difference between us was that the Unionist champions chose the path that they felt would lead to the wool sack, while I went the road that I knew must lead to the dock. And the event proved that we were both right.

We had been told and had been asked to hope that after the war Ireland would get Home Rule—as a reward of her lifeblood shed for a cause, whomever else the success of which should benefit, it surely cannot benefit Ireland.

What will Home Rule be in return for what the vague promise has taken and still hopes to take away from Ireland?

Home Rule when it comes, if it does, will find Ireland drained of all that is vital to her very existence—unless it be that unquenchable hope that we build on the graves of the dead. We are told that if Irishmen go by the thousands to die, not for Ireland, but for Flanders and for Belgium—for a patch of sand on the deserts of Mesopotamia or a rocky trench on the heights of Gallipoli—they will be winning self-government for Ireland.

But if they dare lay down their lives on their native soil, if they dare even dream that freedom can be won

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only at home by men resolved to fight for it there, then they are traitors to their country.

If we are to be indicted as criminals—to be shot as murderers and imprisoned as convicts because the offence is that we love Ireland more than we value our lives—then I know not what virtue resides in any offer of self-government held out to brave men on such terms.

Self-government is our right, a thing born in us, no more to be doled to us or withheld from us by another people than right itself—than the right to feel the warmth of the sun or smell the flowers—or love our kind.

It is only from the convict that these things are withheld for a crime committed and proven—and Ireland, that has wronged no man, injured no man, sought no dominion over others—Ireland is treated to-day among the nations of the world as if it were a convicted criminal.

If there be no right in rebellion against such a state of things as no savage tribe would endure without resistance, then I am sure it is better for men to fight and die without right than to live in such a state of rights as this.

Where all your rights become only accumulated wrongs, where men must beg with bated breath for leave to subsist in their own land, to think their own thoughts, sing their own songs, garner the fruits of their own labors, then surely it is the braver, saner and truer thing to be a rebel against such circumstances as this than to tamely accept them as the natural lot of men.

My Lord, I have done.

## *Roger David Casement*

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### *(c) The Execution*

Practically to the very hour of Roger Casement's execution strenuous efforts were made by his friends and sympathisers in the United States and Ireland, and even in England, to secure a reprieve. The Pope also pleaded for him. Petitions for mercy poured in upon the British Government, and efforts were made to obtain action by President Wilson. Repeated attempts to pass a resolution through the United States Senate requesting the President to urge Great Britain to extend mercy to Casement failed. The only action taken in Washington was the passage of a resolution by the Senate asking the President to use his good offices with the British authorities to obtain clemency for Irish political offenders in general. This resolution was forwarded on August 2nd by cable, by direction of the President. Before it was received by the British Government, Casement had been hanged.

Many prominent men in Great Britain interested themselves in Casement's behalf, including Bernard Shaw, W. B. Yeats, Arnold Bennett, Israel Zangwill, H. W. Nevinson, and John Galsworthy. The hopes of the con-

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demned man's friends were extinguished when Lord Robert Cecil, Minister of War Trade, announced that the British Government was determined not to grant a reprieve. Lord Robert declared that Casement was much more "malignant and hostile" to Great Britain than were the leaders who took an actual part in the Sinn Fein revolt, and that there was no ground which could be brought forward in mitigation of his offence.

Casement was hanged at nine o'clock on the morning of August 3rd in Pentonville jail, London.

Two hours before the execution a crowd of men, women, and children gathered before the prison gates. Twenty minutes before Casement mounted the scaffold the great prison bell began to toll. The sound was greeted with cheers from the crowd, mingled with some groans. At nine o'clock the crowd had swollen to such proportions that it extended for two blocks from the prison front. At one minute after nine a single stroke on the big bell announced that the trap had been sprung. It was the signal for a mocking, jeering yell from the crowd, which suddenly died away into dead silence.

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Casement met his death with calm courage, according to eye-witnesses. He rose at about half-past five o'clock. From then until seven o'clock, when Father McCarroll arrived, he spent the time reading the instruction of the church for assisting at Mass, and the taking of his first Communion. After Mass he ate a little bread and butter and drank a glass of water. He had very little to say to the priest, only making a few remarks about the immortality of the soul. "He appeared," said Father McCarroll, "like a man who had slept soundly—his nerves were completely calm."

After Father McCarroll and another priest had administered the rites of the Roman Catholic Church, the clergymen, with Casement following, a warder on either side, proceeded toward the execution shed, only five yards away. The priests recited the litany of the dying, Casement responding in low tones: "Lord have mercy on my soul."

As the party reached the shed where the gallows was erected, the special executioner, a barber named Ellis, approached Casement and pinioned him. The two chaplains, the under-sheriff of London, and the under-sheriff of Middlesex, then took their positions in front

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of the scaffold. Casement mounted the gallows steps firmly, and commended his spirit to God as he stepped on the trap.

Immediately after the trap was sprung the prison engineer and physician descended into the pit where, after the application of the usual tests, Casement was pronounced dead at nine minutes after nine. According to the custom in the case of prisoners hanged for crimes similar to that of Casement, his body was buried in quicklime in the prison yard.

An affecting incident took place outside the prison wall as the execution was in progress. At the back of the prison, a little distance from the jeering crowd about the gates, was a group of about thirty Irish men and women. When the dull clang of the prison bell announced that the doomed man had paid the last penalty, this little group fell on their knees, and with bowed heads remained for some moments silently praying for the repose of the soul of their dead fellow countryman.

Immediately after the execution three notices were posted on the prison door. The first, signed by the under-sheriff of London, the governor of the prison, and Father James McCarroll, Casement's confessor, read:

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"Judgment of death was this day executed on Roger David Casement in His Majesty's prison of Pentonville, in our presence."

A similar notice was signed by the undersheriff of Middlesex County. The third bore the name of P. R. Mander, the prison surgeon, who certified that he had examined the body and found Casement dead.

During his last night, Casement showed not the slightest concern over his fate. He chatted freely and cheerfully with two warders in his cell. After a late supper he took off his convict clothes and went to bed. He was notified that he would be allowed to wear his own civilian clothes for the execution, but that he must not wear a collar.

Casement was brought up a Protestant, but became a Roman Catholic a few weeks before his death. On June 29 he was registered as a member of the Roman Catholic Church, and since that time Fathers McCarroll and Carey, of Eden Grove Church, near the prison, ministered to him. He received his first and only communion at seven o'clock that last morning when he assisted at Mass in his cell. One of his attendants said that his last words, apart from his prayers, were:



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"I die for my country."

Father McCarroll said that he found Casement to be a beautiful character, and that he never instructed any one in his religion who showed himself a quicker or more promising learner.

A Coroner's jury found that the sentence had been carried out in accordance with law and in a humane manner. George Gavan Duffy, Casement's solicitor, who appeared in behalf of relatives, identified the body. He made a plea that the body be handed over to relatives, which the authorities, he said, had refused. The Coroner declared he had no power to interfere, whereupon Duffy protested, saying it was a "monstrous act of indecency that the authorities should refuse the request."

At the inquest the governor of the prison and the chief warden testified that death was instantaneous. Dr. Mander was asked by Gavan Duffy whether there was any truth in the statement published that Casement had been insane. He replied:

"I saw no evidence of insanity. He acted in a sane manner to the end."—*From a Contemporary Account.*

## CHAPTER XVII

THOMAS MacDONAGH

**T**HOMAS MacDONAGH may be said to have left two testaments—one is his poem, "Wishes for My Son," written to his first child, Donnach, born in 1912, on Saint Cecilia's Day; and the other is his book *Literature in Ireland*. One is what he leaves to his first-born; the other is what he leaves to the resurgent Ireland that he knew. For his son:

. . . I wish you more than I  
Ever knew of glorious deed,  
Though no rapture passed me by  
That an eager heart could heed,  
Though I followed heights and sought  
Things the sequel never brought;

Wild and perilous holy things  
Flaming with a martyr's blood,  
And the joy that laughs and sings  
Where a foe must be withstood,  
Joy of headlong happy chance  
Leading on the battle dance.

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But I found no enemy,  
No man in a world of wrong,  
That Christ's word of charity  
Did not render clean and strong—  
Who was I to judge my kind,  
Blindest proper of the blind?

God to you may give the sight  
And the clear undoubting strength  
Wars to knit for single right  
Freedom's war to knit at length,  
And to win, through wrath and strife,  
To the sequel of my life.

But for you, so small and young,  
Born on Saint Cecilia's Day,  
I in more harmonious song  
Now for nearer joys should pray—  
Simple joys: the natural growth  
Of your childhood and your youth,  
Courage, innocence, and truth:

These for you, so small and young,  
In your hand and heart and tongue.

To coming Irish generations, by his *Literature in Ireland*, he leaves not only his knowledge and his discoveries, but his brave hopes for a high destiny.

These high hopes are stated proudly in his comment on a little Gaelic poem that he



**THOMAS MACDONAGH**



**JAMES CONNOLLY**



**EAMONN CEANNT  
(EDMOND KENT)**



**EDWARD DALY**

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quotes: "The Gaelic revival has given to some of us a new arrogance. I am a Gael and I know no cause but of pride in that—*gaedheal mé agus ní h-eol dom gur ndír dom é*. My race has survived the wiles of the foreigner here. It has refused to yield even to defeat, and emerges strong to-day, full of hope and of love, with new strength in its arms to work its new destiny, with a new song on its lips and the word of the new language, which is the ancient language, still calling from age to age. The adorable delicacy, the shrinking sensibility, the paralysing diffidence which has its root in charity, the qualities which make for temporary defeat and yet, being of their nature joined with the unwavering conviction of truth and right, for ultimate victory—these live on. Now with them, in the same breasts with them, lives this too: its day is come. This arrogance is a sign of energy, of vitality, and so here is good."

Search, eagerness, devotedness—these are the words that spell out Thomas MacDonagh's spirit for me. His life was an eager search for something to which he could give the whole devotion of his being. He was a scholar and a poet, but we who knew him

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will remember him as the eager friend and the happy-hearted companion.

It is terrible to think that we shall never see again that short figure with the scholar's brow and the dominating nose, nor ever listen again to his flow of learned, witty and humorous talk. We may keep one deep regret about MacDonagh—it is that he has left so little of the happy-hearted and humorous part of his nature in his poetry. He knew the popular life in the Irish countryside and the Irish country town intimately, but he has put his feeling for this popular and humorous life only into one poem quite completely—into the unique and masterly “John-John.” “John-John” is brimful of good spirits and good humour, and it is like nothing else in Irish poetry.

I dreamt last night of you, John-John,  
And thought you called to me;  
And when I woke this morning, John,  
Yourself I hoped to see;  
But I was all alone, John-John,  
Though still I heard your call;  
I put my boots and bonnet on,  
And took my Sunday shawl,  
And went full sure to find you, John,  
At Nenagh fair.

*Thomas MacDonagh*

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The fair was just the same as then,  
Five years ago to-day,  
When first you left the thimble men  
And came with me away;  
For there again were thimble men  
And shooting galleries,  
And card-trick men and maggie-men,  
Of all sorts and degrees;  
But not a sight of you, John-John,  
Was anywhere.

I turned my face to home again,  
And called myself a fool  
To think you'd leave the thimble men  
And live again by rule,  
And go to mass and keep the fast  
And till the little patch;  
My wish to have you home was past  
Before I raised the latch  
And pushed the door and saw you, John,  
Sitting down there.

How cool you came in here, begad,  
As if you owned the place!  
But rest yourself there now, my lad,  
'Tis good to see your face;  
My dream is out, and now by it  
I think I know my mind:  
At six o'clock this house you'll quit,  
And leave no grief behind;—  
But until six o'clock, John-John,  
My bit you'll share.



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The neighbours' shame of me began  
When first I brought you in;  
To wed and keep a tinker man  
They thought a kind of sin;  
But now this three years since you're gone  
'Tis pity me they do,  
And that I'd rather have, John-John,  
Than that they'd pity you,  
Pity for me and you, John-John,  
I could not bear.

Oh, you're my husband right enough,  
But what's the good of that?  
You know you never were the stuff  
To be the cottage cat,  
To watch the fire and hear me lock  
The door and put out Shep—  
But there, now, it is six o'clock  
And time for you to step.  
God bless and keep you far, John-John!  
And that's my prayer.

Thomas MacDonagh was born in 1877, in Cloughjordan, a town in the County Tipperary, where his father and mother were teachers in primary schools. He was trained by a religious order, and was, indeed, a religious novice in early youth. He became a teacher in a college in Kilkenny and afterwards in Fermoy. While he was in Kilkenny he took

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up the study of Irish. Afterwards he went to the Aran Islands, and to the Irish-speaking districts in Munster, and made himself fluent in the language. He published two volumes of literary verse, "April and May" and "Through the Ivory Gate."

In 1908, just before Pearse opened his school at St. Enda's, MacDonagh came to Dublin. He had written a play and wanted to have it produced in the Abbey Theatre. The play was "When the Dawn is Come." The scene is laid in the Ireland of the future, and the play is the tragedy of a leader whose master-idea baffled his followers. MacDonagh had joined the staff of St. Enda's School when this play was produced.

His great interest then was poetry. He knew poetry well in English, French, Latin and Irish and was drawn to the classical poets—to Horace, Dante and Racine. After he came to Dublin the poetry he wrote was more personal than that which had appeared in "Through the Ivory Gate" and "April and May." What he wrote in the first four years is in "Songs of Myself."

When this book was published he went to Paris for a while to do some reading. Then

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he took his M.A. degree in the National University. Professor Houston in the College of Science, with James Stephens, MacDonagh and myself started the *Irish Review*. MacDonagh was associate editor, first with the three of us, and, after an interregnum, with his friend Joseph Plunkett. He wrote a thesis, "Thomas Campion and the Art of English Poetry," and was made assistant professor of English literature in the National University, Dublin.

He was, when the Home Rule Bill reached its last stages, happily married, and was the father of the child he has addressed in "Wishes for My Son." He would, I believed at the time, have welcomed a reasonable settlement of Irish political conditions from the government of Great Britain. We often thought of him in a Home Rule Parliament, working at social and legislative questions, and perhaps training himself to become a Minister of Education. But the English Conservative Party made the granting or the withdrawal of Home Rule a question of military preparation and racial manliness. Those in Ireland who had conviction, courage and military organization would have their way, the

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Conservative press and the Conservative leaders declared. They insisted that all conviction, courage and organization were on the anti-Home Rule side. So the Nationalists formed their Volunteers. From the start Thomas MacDonagh had a place on the Volunteer Executive, and the command of a corps.

His progress towards a fuller and prouder nationalism is shown in the studies he wrote and the lectures he delivered from the months before the war until January, 1916. "The Gaelic revival has given some of us a new arrogance." It was not altogether the Gaelic revival that had done this: it was the Gaelic revival plus the military movement in Ireland. Neither the Gaelic movement alone nor the Volunteer movement alone could have created the racial pride that carried with it an assumption of military ability. "These wars and their sequel may turn literature definitely into ways towards which I looked, confirming the promise of our high destiny here." So he wrote in January last in the preface to *Literature in Ireland*. While always looking forward to an Ireland that would have a culture of her own and a political system and politi-

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cal relationships of her own, MacDonagh had looked, before the Volunteers were created, for a reasonable settlement of the immediate differences between Great Britain and Ireland. Ten years ago the Liberals offered Ireland a very slight measure of autonomy in a Council Bill which a Nationalist convention rejected. Two years afterwards Thomas MacDonagh said to me that the country should have accepted even this slight measure, inasmuch as it gave control of education and created the possibility of checking financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland. In the book, written during the time of military preparation, he reveals himself as the most idealistic of the lovers of Cathleen ni Houlihan—in the first study he speaks of the cause that never dies—"the ideal held always by the Gaelic race that once dominated Europe, now held by the heir and successor of that race here, the Irish. The calamities of our history have given a voice to that cause. The constancy of our race has given pride to that voice." He tells us that in Irish literature the themes were, originally, nature and humanity—"Later, after the English had settled in the land, not humanity but the nation, Cathleen

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*Thomas MacDonagh*

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ni Houlihan, is our heroic theme. The national rose of Ireland is An Roisin Dubh, the Little Black Rose, not the tender red flower to be plucked with the joys of life." "It is well for us," he says again, "that our workers are poets and our poets workers; . . . And it is well too that here still that cause which is identified without underthought of commerce, with the cause of God and Right and Freedom, the cause which has been the great theme of our poetry, may any day call the poets to give their lives in the old service."

A writer in a review published by the National University where he lectured—*Studies*—notes that during the months of preparation for revolt MacDonagh never showed signs of distraction or inattention—"Day by day, as if there was no other concern in the world, he lectured on English literature with a fluency which was not merely of words but sprang from an alert mind and a large store of ideas and criticisms."

Some years before, in his everyday life, Thomas MacDonagh would have accepted an everyday settlement of the problem of self-government. But there was always something fatalistic and prophetic about his vision of

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his own relation to the cause of Irish independence. His play, "When the Dawn is Come," had for its hero the baffled leader of a revolutionary army in an Ireland of the future. His actual speech before the court-martial that sentenced him not only reproduces the thoughts, but the peculiar rhythms of the sentences in that play. In history his heroes were the frustrated leaders of a people's uprising—Owen Roe O'Neill in seventeenth century Ireland, and one of the Gracchi in Republican Rome. His mental dramatization of the revolutionary Roman was extraordinarily prophetic—he had a vision of the tumult in the capital and the conflict in the streets and the acts of Imperial vengeance.

He commanded the Volunteer force that occupied Jacob's factory, and he held his position from Monday until the following Sunday. He received from Pearse the command to surrender in order to save his followers and the city. "When he received the message he sat considering," says one who came with Pearse's message. He said, "I am thinking of my men and their position." After a while he said, "Well, we had better give in, there is no chance."

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*Thomas MacDonagh*

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The narrator says that he went to his men and put the situation before them, and they consented to surrender. He then went with the military in a motorcar to the South Dublin Union where Eamon Ceannt was in command, and asked him to give in, and Ceannt consented. He next went to the malt house of Guinness's Brewery and asked the Volunteer officer there to surrender. This officer too surrendered upon MacDonagh's advice.

The military gave a quarter of an hour to his court-martial. He was called up at midnight in Richmond Barracks and told he would be shot at dawn. He sent for his sister, who is a nun, and his confessor. His wife was not able to reach him. His sister found him in "a dank, vile cell." She was lighted to it by the butt end of a candle. He confessed, made his act for Holy Communion aloud, made his thanksgiving aloud, and sat down and wrote to his wife. When he finished this letter he went to pray before the crucifix. When his sister came in, she found he had had nothing to eat or drink; there was no water to wash in, and the sentry remained standing by them in the small cell. She turned to the sentry and said, "Will you



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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give him some water to wash in," and the sentry said, "No."

His sister gave him their mother's rosary and he put it around his neck. "I hope they will give me this when it is all over," she said. "Ah, no," he said quietly, "they will shoot it to bits."

"But they didn't," says the narrator; "they shot four beads out of it, and his sister has the rosary now."

When the time came he went quietly along the corridor to his death.

In the old heroic Irish story Finn was asked what music he preferred. He spoke of the song of the blackbird, the screaming of the eagle, the sound of the waterfall, the bay of the hounds. And when Oisinn was asked what music delighted him he said, "The music of the thing that happens." MacDonagh could have made the lofty answer of Oisinn. He surely loved the music of the thing that happened. He followed the music that meant a language revival, the music that meant a Volunteer movement, the music that meant the Irish Republic. And he stood up, too, to the music that meant the vengeance of the

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*Thomas MacDonagh*

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Imperial conquerors. He has left us his own  
proud epitaph:

His songs were a little phrase  
Of eternal song,  
Drowned in the harping of lays  
More loud and long.

His deed was a single word  
Called out alone  
In a night where no echo stirred  
To laughter or moan.

But his songs' new souls shall thrill  
The loud harps dumb,  
And his deed the echoes fill  
When the dawn is come.

PADRAIC COLUM.

*Thomas MacDonagh's Speech from the  
Dock*<sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen of the Courtmartial,

I choose to think you have but done your duty, according to your lights, in sentencing me to death. I thank you for your courtesy. It would not be seemly for me to go to my doom without trying to express, how-

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<sup>1</sup> The authenticity of this speech has been questioned; a very clever man conversant with MacDonagh's writings might have concocted it.

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## *The Irish Rebellion*

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ever inadequately, my sense of the high honor I enjoy in being one of those predestined to die in this generation for the cause of Irish Freedom. You will, perhaps, understand this sentiment, for it is one to which an Imperial poet of a bygone age bore immortal testimony: "'Tis sweet and glorious to die for one's country." You would all be proud to die for Britain, your Imperial patron, and I am proud and happy to die for Ireland, my glorious Fatherland.

A member of the Court—"You speak of Britain as our Imperial patron."

The Prisoner—"Yes, for some of you are Irishmen."

A member of the Court—"And what of your Imperial patron; what of Germany?"

The Prisoner—"Not if Germany had violated and despoiled my country and persisted in withholding her birth-right of Freedom."

The President—"Better not interrupt the prisoner."  
(The prisoner bowed.)

There is not much left to say. The proclamation of the Irish Republic has been adduced in evidence against me as one of the signatories; you think it already a dead and buried letter, but it lives, it lives. From minds alight with Ireland's vivid intellect it sprang, in hearts aflame with Ireland's mighty love it was conceived. Such documents do not die. The British occupation of Ireland has never for more than one hundred years been compelled to confront in the field of fight a rising so formidable as that which overwhelming forces have for the moment succeeded in quelling. This rising did not result from accidental circumstances. It came in due

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### *Thomas MacDonagh*

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recurrent season as the necessary outcome of forces that are ever at work. The fierce pulsation of resurgent pride that disclaims servitude may one day cease to throb in the heart of Ireland—but the heart of Ireland will that day be dead. While Ireland lives, the brains and brawn of her manhood will strive to destroy the last vestige of British rule in her territory. In this ceaseless struggle there will be, as there has been, and must be, an alternate ebb and flow. But let England make no mistake. The generous high-bred youth of Ireland will never fail to answer the call we pass on to them—will never fail to blaze forth in the red rage of war to win their country's Freedom. Other and tamer methods they will leave to other and tamer men; but they must do or die.

It will be said that our movement was doomed to failure. It has proved so. Yet it might have been otherwise. There is always a chance of success for brave men who challenge fortune. That we had such a chance none knows so well as your statesmen and military experts. The mass of the people of Ireland will doubtless lull their consciences to sleep for another generation by the exploded fable that Ireland cannot successfully fight England.

We do not profess to represent the mass of the people of Ireland. We stand for the intellect and the soul of Ireland. To Ireland's soul and intellect the inert mass, drugged and degenerate by ages of servitude, must, in the distant day of resurrection, render homage and free service—receiving in return the vivifying impress of a free people. Gentlemen, you have sentenced me to death, and I accept your sentence with joy and pride, since it is

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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for Ireland I am to die. I go to join the goodly company of the men who died for Ireland, the least of whom was worthier far than I can claim to be, and that noble band are, themselves, but a small section of the great un-numbered army of martyrs, whose Captain is the Christ who died on Calvary. Of every white-robed knight in all that goodly company we are the spiritual kin.

The forms of heroes flit before my vision, and there is one, the star of whose destiny sways my own; there is one the keynote of whose nature chimes harmoniously with the swan song of my soul. It is the great Florentine, whose weapon was not the sword, but prayer and preaching. The seed he sowed fructifies to this day in God's Church. Take me away, and let my blood bedew the sacred soil of Ireland. I die in the certainty that once more the seed will fructify.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### COUNTESS DE MARKIEVICZ

**I**N that famous Irish ballad, "The Boys of Wexford," the story is told of an English captain's daughter who became a convert to the cause of Irish freedom.

*"In came the Captain's daughter,  
The Captain of the Yeos,  
Saying brave United Irishmen  
We'll ne'er again be foes.  
A thousand pounds I'll forfeit  
And fly from home with thee;  
I'll dress myself in man's attire  
And strike for liberty."*

Such another convert, drawn from the ranks of the garrison, was Constance de Markievicz. She came of "planter" stock, Protestant in religion, English in origin. Her father, Sir Henry Gore-Booth, was one of the biggest landowners in the West of Ireland, her mother

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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was English, related by close ties to many aristocratic English families. The early environment of Constance Gore-Booth was distinctly alien to Ireland. Made up of house parties in the homes of the garrison in Ireland, or in England amongst the conservative governing class, hunting, driving, dancing at Dublin Castle balls—it was a life not calculated to produce a democrat and revolutionary. But even in this life spent in freedom in the invigorating air of County Sligo, she received some of her most valuable training, some of the assets which stood her best in after life. She became famous throughout the West as a daring horse-woman and crack shot. She stored up a treasure-house of the most perfect health and abundant energy, so that later on in life the frail-appearing, slender Countess was able to do more than a man's share of work for the cause she had at heart.

Although her parents were somewhat alien in point of view to the people amongst whom they lived, still they did not belong to the class of "absentee landlords" who did so much to ruin Irish rural life. They were honestly concerned in an attempt to build up the Irish country side, to foster and introduce indus-



COUNTESS DE MARKIEWICZ



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### *Countess de Markievicz*

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tries and to encourage genius wherever it lifted its head. They believed in the mission of the aristocrat, they saw themselves as leaders, builders, reformers. This teaching of the aristocratic mission was early dinned into the ears of their children, and had a marked effect on the life of Constance. Long after she had lost touch with her aristocratic friends, and thrown in her lot with democrats and revolutionaries, she continued to believe in this mission, and to champion the unpopular "planter" class amongst her friends. The belief brought with it no doctrine of aristocratic idleness, but, on the contrary, a desire to construct and reform, which made it inevitable that she should drift sooner or later in the direction of those leaders of the Irish-Ireland movement, who loved best to call themselves "nation-builders."

Her young girlhood and early womanhood were devoted principally to art. She had a very marked talent for painting, and for many years her name was known, not as the leader of a political party, but as one of the ablest of the modern Irish artists. In Paris, whither she had gone to study, she married a fellow-artist, Count Casimir de Markievicz, in the

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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year 1900, and they went to live in his home in Poland. Their sojourn there was short. The antiquated social customs and above all the primitive ideas of comfort and sanitation prevalent in Poland did not fit in with the tastes of the progressive Countess. She used to relate how Count de Markievicz's Polish neighbors regarded his home as quite remarkable for its comfort and for its modern fittings, and still it was only after a prolonged and heated argument that she succeeded in having sleeping-quarters built for the servants. In Poland it is the aristocratic custom to allow the servants of both sexes to sleep on the stairs, the door mat, or any other place they can find. Life in such a country did not appeal to the Countess, and she persuaded her husband to make his home in Ireland. The manner of her return from Poland is so characteristic of the generous woman that it must be recorded. Just as they were about to leave, a poor Jew came to the house and, throwing himself at the feet of the Countess, implored her to contrive the escape of his young son who would otherwise be forced into the Russian army. She was deeply touched by the old man's grief and determined to help the

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*Countess de Markievicz*

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son. By some means she managed to bring the boy safely out of Russia, and over to Dublin.

Dublin just then was a place of such extraordinary intellectual activity, so much endeavour, so many "movements" for the revival of one or another of the arts, that it was said, "Irishmen are ceasing to be men and becoming movements." It was impossible to be in any way intellectually active without being drawn into one of these movements. The intellectual nets were so widely spread and so interwoven that big fish and small fry alike were caught. There were no intellectual boundary lines—poets wrote treatises on wireless telegraphy, wireless telegraphists produced dramas. Above all, there were no dilettantes amongst them, they were propagandists first, litterateurs after. They dressed in homespun and dreamt of purple and fine linen. It was into this world that Countess Markievicz and her Polish husband came when they arrived in Dublin. The Count was something of a dramatist, the Countess something of an actress. Dublin was over-run with dramatists and producers of dramas. Every organisation produced plays. Some produced

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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propaganda plays, others produced non-propaganda plays that they might raise funds to carry on their propaganda. It was rather like taking in each other's washing; those who were not interested in any particular propaganda produced plays to revenge themselves on the propagandists. Whether the Count and Countess may be classed under the latter heading, or whether they were actuated by a sincere desire to encourage art cannot be said, but the fact remains that they very soon found themselves producing plays—mostly plays written by the Count, and not at all concerned with propaganda. Their house at this period became the theatrical wardrobe of Dublin. Mighty swords suitable for fifteenth century warriors, wigs, top boots, Georgian costumes, were the normal furniture of the Markievicz home. One met ladies on the stairs in robes of barbaric splendor, one was confronted at the door by French students in the costume of the Latin Quarter.

But dramatic societies entirely failed to satisfy the craving for constructive work which was the prevalent disease in Dublin, and to which the Countess fell an easy victim. She began to move from one group to another

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*Countess de Markievicz*

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asking with all the earnestness of a new convert, "What work can I do for Ireland?"

In 1909 Countess Markievicz commenced the work by which she will be remembered, the work which she rightly regarded as the most important of her life. She organised and equipped the first armed national force in Ireland—a force of Irish boy scouts. The leaders of the Baden-Powell boy scout movement which had made great progress in England, commenced to turn their eyes towards Ireland in this year. Irishmen who had long been opposed to Ireland furnishing any recruits for the English army or navy, saw in the attempt to enlist Irish boys in the Baden-Powell scouts a new and subtle method of recruitment for the English forces. The boys were to be drilled by officers of the English army, and to be inspected frequently by high government and army officials. Baden-Powell in his efforts to make the organisation particularly attractive for Irish boys wrote to the late Mr. Padraic Pearse, whose influence with boys was far-famed, asking him to write a book suitable for the use of an Irish branch of the English boy scouts. But although Mr. Pearse refused, and although many nationalists raised their

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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voices in warning against the Baden-Powell organisation, yet none of them thought of the possibility of forming an Irish national boys organisation as a counter-blow to the English one. Countess Markievicz, who had begun to acquire some fame as a public speaker, mooted the project at several meetings without getting much encouragement. To some of her confederates the idea of training and arming boys of twelve and thirteen seemed useless labor. But to their criticisms the Countess was wont to reply, "In ten years these boys will be men." Two of the boys, since become men, have given up their lives bravely in an attempt to establish an Irish Republic—Seán Heuston and Cornelius Colbert faced an English firing squad in Dublin—whilst another, Liam Mellows, showed great military ability as the captain who led the rising in Galway. It is a remarkable tribute to the ability of their founder that the Irish boy scouts successfully challenged the power of the Baden-Powell scouts in Ireland, for whilst the Baden-Powell scouts had on their side influential men, money and experienced organisers, the Irish organisation started without any funds, and was organised by people who knew nothing about the things

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*Countess de Markievicz*

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which they professed to teach. In order to get the nucleus for the organisation Countess Markievicz went to a friendly school-master who supplied her with the names of some of his pupils. Weeks passed in a fruitless attempt to put the organisation on a solid footing, and at last it became evident to the organisers that an organisation for Irish boys must differ radically from an English one. So instead of studying the most modern methods of training boys the organisers went for their model to the earliest system of organisation and education known in Ireland. They studied the method by which the Irish champions were disciplined in the pre-Christian era and applied it, with modifications, of course, to the modern organisation. The boys took the name of the heroic Irish brotherhood, the Fianna, and a boys' republic, or clan, was the ultimate form taken by their organisation. As for money to carry on their work, they were all poor boys, but pennies turned into the treasury faithfully every week soon provided each boy with his equipment. Countess Markievicz, writing of the financial difficulties which they had to meet at the beginning of their career, says: "On the surface it may seem that we



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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have been hampered for want of funds, but I believe that an organisation built up on hard work and self-sacrifice, will be of more lasting use to the country than one launched with thousands of pounds, employing secretaries, etc., and hiring halls galore. A mushroom organisation of this kind could be established in a week, the boys would join it for what they would get, and would stop in it for what they got. Our boys join *Na Fianna Eireann* for what they can give."

The boys of the Fianna were the sons of men connected with many different political parties, so that "politics" were strictly taboo in their ranks. Their real political belief was the same as that of the ancient Fianna—they were Irish Militarists. The Irish language figured very largely in their training, whilst each boy was required to take a pledge on entering the organisation that he would never join any of England's armed forces. Beyond these teachings and beliefs their instruction was purely military. As the organisation grew in size the home of Countess Markievicz became more and more like an encampment. A French journalist visiting Dublin in 1913 wrote: "The salon of Countess Markievicz

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*Countess de Markievicz*

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is not a salon but a military headquarters." The clan Fianna had in Countess Markievicz a devoted chieftain. Every boy in the organisation was her especial care; they were all equally interesting to her, whether they showed the stamp of heroes or the hall-mark of mediocrity. In pursuance of her belief in the commune system she rented a large house in the outskirts of Dublin where she went to live with some of the more promising of her clan. The police of the neighborhood were perturbed for a few months by the sight of Fianna boys in the grounds of the Markievicz home practising shooting at a row of dummy English soldiers. The commune plan was, however, unsuccessful. The boys were all town bred, and they could not endure the limitations of country life. Countess Markievicz used to relate how one of her boys disappeared on the first morning of an encampment, and returned triumphant after a time with a bucket in one hand containing a dark grey liquid which proved to be milk, and a dead hen in the other. He had been foraging in the neighborhood, and had made a successful raid on some of the neighbors' stock, thinking like

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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most town bred boys that everything which grew in the country was wild.

After the unsuccessful experiment in country life the Markieviczs took up their residence in Surrey House, Dublin, which soon became a place of safety for refugees, a gathering place for writers, painters, politicians, and a hostel for revolutionaries visiting Dublin from all parts of the globe. So long as there was a bed, a sofa, nay, a few cushions and a rug left to make a couch on the floor no one was denied a lodging in the Markievicz home. The generosity of the Countess was so great, her hospitality so extraordinary, that many of her friends made it a practice to get in by the window and spend the night in her house if they were in the neighborhood. It often happened that the Countess did not know whom she entertained until she came down to breakfast in the morning. But before all others two classes of guests were the most welcome—refugees from the English law, and Fianna boys. During the labor war of 1913, in which Jim Larkin figured so prominently, the Countess threw herself heart and soul into the struggle on behalf of the strikers. Twenty thousand men and women had been locked out

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*Countess de Markievicz*

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by the big Dublin employers, and Dublin, normally poor, was threatened with starvation. It was on this occasion that Countess Markievicz gave a new proof of her remarkable organising ability in carrying out another work at which she had had no experience. Throughout the city of Dublin she organised a series of food kitchens, milk depots, and clothing stations which undoubtedly saved the strikers' families from starvation.

In addition to collecting funds, and personally supervising the work, the Countess organised a band of workers to visit the homes of those applying for help and report to her on the different cases. In those strike days she used to leave the house every morning at eight o'clock, and return to her home at eight in the evening. Many of the men working under her broke down under the strain, but she continued to work until the struggle was over. She spoke in terms of the greatest admiration of the strikers, who never asked for more from the Relief Fund than the bare necessities of life. A close personal association with these people gave her a greater pride in the Irish race, and made her more of a patriot. The strike had brought together in a

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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common sympathy for the strikers many men and women of diverse political opinions. It was no uncommon thing to meet dramatists, boy scouts, girl strikers, lawyers, together with such noted Dublin celebrities as George Russell (*Æ*), James Stephens and Jim Larkin in the Markievicz home. The house was always surrounded by detectives, but in spite of this it was the sojourn of most refugees, or people who wanted to evade the vigilancy of Dublin Castle and carry out some defiant exploit. During the strike of 1913 warrants were issued for the arrest of two or three of the Dublin strike leaders, including Jim Larkin, and a great meeting which Larkin proposed to hold in O'Connell Street was proclaimed by Dublin Castle. Larkin was determined to hold the meeting in spite of the proclamation, and in order to avoid arrest he made his way to Surrey House, sure of a welcome. It so happened that Count Markievicz was due to return from a visit to his Polish estates on the night Larkin arrived, and this home-coming proved a blessing to the conspirators. A party of the Count's theatrical friends met him at the station, and were invited to return to Surrey House for an impromptu dance. The watch-

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*Countess de Markievicz*

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ing and suspicious detectives were thrown off their trail, for, instead of a dark house, with the expected air of mystery and conspiracy, they saw a brightly lighted place filled with a bohemian, care-free gathering. The party itself, it may be said, were quite unaware that they were there to dress the stage for a conspiracy. In the morning all the theatrical experience of the Count and Countess was called into play, and Larkin, who is six feet two in height, was outfitted in a suit belonging to Count Markievicz, who is six feet four, and was adorned with the respectable grey beard of a Presbyterian minister. The elderly minister left Surrey House early on the morning fixed for the proclaimed meeting, and, outwitting all the detectives, reached the appointed place, and delivered his speech.

It was natural that a military and extremely militant organisation of boys should conduct a great deal of their propaganda by means of boxing matches. It was obvious to them that the world must acknowledge the boys' organisation which produced the strongest, bravest, and most skillful fighters as the organisation most worthy of respect and support. The natural enemy of an Irish boy

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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scout was an English boy scout. The Baden-Powell scouts never attained to a vigorous life in Dublin because the parents of these boys who had watched their sons go forth radiant in battle array generally saw them return later minus hats and poles, and plus black eyes. Many of the Fianna treasured incredible quantities of Baden-Powell trophies won in honorable combat on the streets of Dublin. Countess Markievicz never discouraged or punished these young warriors. She knew that they were the sons of men who had had the superiority of Englishmen over Irishmen preached to them from their earliest days, men who had behind them a long tradition of failure and defeat, who had been taught to believe that the Irish went forth to battle but they always fell. These victories down back lanes counted for much in the training of the boys. They learned to keep their heads in a fight, to scorn cowardice, to think lightly of cuts and bruises, and, above all, to know their own strength. Some of them, since become men, have had sixteen years of training in such street fighting. They were veterans when the men were raw recruits in the Volunteer movement.



**RUINS OF THE ROYAL HIBERNIAN ACADEMY**





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*Countess de Markievicz*

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On July 26th, 1914, the Fianna received their baptism of fire. On the occasion of the famous Howth gun-running episode the boys were mobilised and sent out with the men to do their share of the work. On the outward march, a march of 8 miles made in 2 hours, they were in charge of trek carts, which were carefully covered, and the contents of which were unknown to them. When they reached the pier in Howth they were ordered to proceed at a double and to distribute the wooden clubs, which the trek carts contained, to the Irish Volunteers. After helping to unload and distribute the cargo of rifles from the yacht, they marched back with the Volunteers. They were met half way between Howth and Dublin by a force of English soldiers and police, who attempted to seize the arms. The part played by the Fianna in this incident is described by one of them in their little periodical, the *Fianna Gazette*. "We got the order to halt, and were told we had got to defend the ammunition at all costs. Our captain drew an automatic pistol and with some of our fellows dashed into the fray. . . . We clustered round the cart with our rifles gripped tightly in our hands." In the end Volunteer com-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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manders had to carry off these boys of fifteen and sixteen almost by force, from their first taste of real armed combat. As the commander of such an excellent fighting force, it is not unnatural that Countess Markievicz, who had long been on the Dublin Castle suspect list, became on the outbreak of the European war a positive hobby with the Castle spies and detectives. In January her home was raided with great solemnity by thirty policemen, who carried off a large number of back numbers of *Munsey's*, and a disused printing press. The Countess had been prepared for their visit for many months, but happened to be out at the time it occurred. She returned just in time to see their exit and to present them with an obsolete make of rifle, which she assured them would lend a colorful and dramatic touch to their visit.

In command of a mixed force of boy scouts, Volunteers, and girls, the Countess took a leading part in the Irish revolution. The Dublin College of Surgeons, St. Stephen's Green, and a great part of the district adjoining it, were held by her force. Wonderful stories of the bravery of the St. Stephen's Green command have come from many widely differing

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### *Countess de Markievicz*

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sources. A student from St. Vincent's Hospital, which stands on the opposite side of the Green to the College of Surgeons, relates how a young girl arrived at the hospital during the hottest part of the firing to bring back a doctor to attend the revolutionary wounded. She had run all the way in a hail of bullets, and the doctor who accompanied her was forced to travel under similar conditions. He found the College splendidly fortified, the strictest discipline being maintained. One of the laboratories had been fitted up partly as a mortuary chapel, partly as a hospital for the wounded. None of the property of the College had been wantonly destroyed, although some of it had been converted to the use of the garrison. The Countess Markievicz was one of the last of the leaders to surrender.

She was sentenced to death by court-martial, but the sentence was altered to imprisonment for life. It is reported that she made a vigorous protest when the change of sentence was announced. She had fought side by side with the fifteen men who were shot. She would have shared in their glory if they had been successful. She longed to share their fate, to die rather than suffer the living death

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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of imprisonment for life. To Countess Markievicz, proud-spirited, fiery, accustomed all her days to untrammelled freedom, the very embodiment of both physical and mental energy, imprisonment for life is a far more bitter fate than death itself. To the Fianna, that edifice of splendid boyhood, which she so carefully built up and consecrated with her own idealism, she will be a real loss. But to them she will also be a deep inspiration. To every boy whose dear and intimate comrade she was, she has become reason for fierce pride in the organisation which she founded.

SIDNEY GIFFORD.

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## CHAPTER XIX

JAMES CONNOLLY

**W**HEN an outsider called at the office of *The Irish Worker*, where James Connolly was in charge, he found there a heavy earnest man who regarded him with deep-set eyes that had in them the shrewdness of the North of Ireland man. When this earnest man stood up to speak to a crowd of impoverished Dublin working people, his deep-set eyes had flashes in them. This man was a fighter. All his blows were as shrewd as mother wit and intellectual training could make them. He spoke as one who had made all preparations and who knew what terms would mean victory for his people. He spoke, as I always thought, like the chief of a general army staff. I was not astonished when I heard that he had been made the Commandant-General of the Dublin army of the Irish Republic.

A native of Monaghan, James Connolly was

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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from his early manhood associated with Irish Separatist politics. A lady who belonged to one of the revolutionary organizations in Dublin once told me of a dramatic intervention by him. It was during the Boer war, and a protest was being made by the Nationalists of Dublin against the system of concentration camps that was helping to deplete the next generation of Boers. The authorities had forbidden the meeting. Those who were to speak at it were in a wagonette, the driver of which had been pulled off or terrorized. The wagonette could not be driven on. Suddenly out of the crowd a dark man appeared, jumped upon the wagonette, seized the reins and drove through the police cordon. The man was James Connolly.

He was in America in 1905-06, working for industrial liberation with his mind always on conditions at home. In New York he started a weekly paper, *The Harp*, and he published in it some chapters of the book he was to complete on his return to his own country, *Labour in Irish History*. He published here, too, his book of poems, *Songs of Irish Freedom*.

"His almost constant thoughts outside his love for Ireland were of love for his family,"

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### *James Connolly*

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writes a comrade who knew him while he lived in America. In Connolly's household, between husband and wife and father and children, there was a wonderful comradeship. He had eight children, most of them girls and all of them young. Nora, his eldest daughter, is a child who has been most wisely and finely trained. She has the spirit of the Spartan and the mind of the Gael. She knows as much of song and story as the most fortunate peasant child, and she knows, too, what forces stand in the way of freedom for her country and her people. With the bravery she has inherited and the training she has been given she was well fitted for the combat.

Connolly was invited to return by a labour group in Ireland and he went back to organize the Irish Workers in Dublin and Belfast. That was about 1906. Soon after his return he published his survey of Irish economic history, *Labour in Irish History*. He knew history and he knew economics, but he knew, too, that the militant force that was necessary in the Irish cities could not be built around abstractions. He said plain and direct, but extremely moderate words about the Irish Transport Workers' Union, the labour organi-



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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zation which he and James Larkin had built up in Dublin—"This union has from its inception fought shy of all theorizing and philosophising about history or tradition, but, addressing itself directly to the work nearest hand, has fought to raise the standard of labour conditions in Dublin to at least an approximation to decent human conditions. To do this it has used as its inspiring battle cry, as the watchword of its members and the keyword of its message, the affirmation, 'An injury to one is the concern of all.' "

The problem of the workers had been shamefully neglected by the Irish politicians. James Connolly and James Larkin created an organization that gave the workers solidarity—a thing difficult to do in Dublin where there are few specialized industries and where general or unskilled labour bears a greater proportion to the whole body of workers than elsewhere, where the workers are engaged in totally dissimilar industries. But the Irish Transport Workers' Union was created—a memorable event in Irish history. Then, after the capitalists and the government authorities had made a frontal attack upon the union in 1913, James Connolly with Captain Robert

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### *James Connolly*

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White founded a defensive force for the Union—the Irish Citizen Army. The accord between the Citizen Army, representing the Dublin workers, and the Volunteers, representing the commercial and the farming classes, was made perfect, and the fact that these two bodies fought and suffered together will have its effect on the future of Irish history. The knitting of the two forces together may be as important as the union of political and economic forces which Michael Davitt made when he founded the Land League.

Connolly with his staff was in the General Post Office during the insurrection. On Thursday, fourth day of the Republic, Joseph Plunkett noted in his journal that Connolly had been wounded: "Commandant General Connolly was wounded in the left arm and ten minutes later in the left leg (by a sniper). The leg wound is serious as it caused a compound fracture of the shin-bone." Connolly had gone into one of the side streets to inspect a barricade. He was shot in the left arm. He returned, ordered his men to do something at the windows so as to take their attention from his wound, and went downstairs and had it dressed. He went into the street again and

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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received the second and more serious wound.

On the afternoon of the same day the houses that were in the way were levelled and the artillery began to smash the Post Office. On Friday evening the fires that had broken out made the place untenable. Connolly, in spite of his dangerous wounds, still gave commands. The men fought their way out of the Post Office, carrying Connolly on a stretcher, and made their headquarters an empty house or stable in Moore Lane. On Saturday they surrendered. Connolly was made a prisoner and was lodged in the Castle Hospital.

He saw his wife in the hospital after his comrades had been executed. He did not know that this had happened and she did not tell him. When she saw him here the military stood around his bed with fixed bayonets. They did not wish to execute him until he was able to stand up to the rifles. His wife and daughter saw him again with the military again guarding him with fixed bayonets. This time he knew that his comrades had met their deaths and that he, too, was to be shot in a few hours.

Up to the day when he formally took charge of all the insurrectionary forces James Con-

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### *James Connolly*

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nolly had been associated with the Irish Citizen Army. In the month before the insurrection, when the Irish Nationalist journals were being suppressed and their type was being broken up by the authorities, the rifles of the Citizen Army turned back the force that had been sent to obliterate Connolly's paper, *The Worker's Republic*. The conduct of the Citizen Army during the insurrection should receive special notice from the historian. They were men with distinct class grievances—they had been penalized by a combination of capitalists the head of which was Mr. William Martin Murphy. He is the president of the Dublin street-car corporation, the owner of a daily newspaper, the *Independent*, and the controller of a great many other interests in the city. The insurrection placed a great deal of Mr. Murphy's property under the hands of the Citizen Army. They occupied a great store and a great hotel owned by him—Clery's store and the Imperial Hotel. But the Citizen Army indulged in no looting and caused no wilful damage to property. Both the hotel and the store were burned down, but not by the Citizen Army. Their splendid restraint was undoubtedly due to the discipline Con-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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nolly had given them and to the fine ideal he had set before them.

What return did the antagonist of the labour movement in Ireland make for this fair and honourable dealing? Connolly's execution was being delayed owing to the wound which prevented him standing erect before the firing squad. Mr. William Martin Murphy might have used his great influence to save the life of a wounded opponent. A plea for clemency had already been raised by the *Manchester Guardian*. On May 10th, the *Independent's* editorial demanded the death of its owner's opponent. "Our view is that all prisoners under the age of twenty-one should be let off unless some grave charge against them individually can be proved" the *Independent* wrote; and then it added, "When, however, we come to some of the ringleaders, instigators and fomentors not yet dealt with, we must make an exception. If these men are treated with too great leniency they will take it as an indication of weakness on the part of the government, and the consequence may not be satisfactory. They may be more truculent than ever, and it is therefore necessary that society should be protected against their activity.

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### *James Connolly*

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Some of the leaders are more guilty and played a more sinister part in the campaign than those who have been already punished severely, and it would be hardly fair to treat these leniently because the cry for clemency has been raised, while those no more guilty than they have been severely punished. Weakness to such men at this stage may be fatal." Two days after this editorial was written, on May 12th, Connolly was shot to death in Kilmainham gaol.

On Sunday night a week before the insurrection his play, "Under which Flag?" was produced at Liberty Hall. The play ends with the choice made by a young Nationalist—he joins the revolutionary instead of the British Army. "You have not finished the play," someone said to Connolly, "you have not shown what happens after that. You will have to write another act." "Not I alone, but all of us together will have to work out that act," Connolly said.

He made a noble end. "Will you pray for those who are going to shoot you?" the surgeon asked him. "I will pray for all good men who do their duty according to their lights," said James Connolly.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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Now that that earnest man, that brave and clear-minded fighter is gone, it is hard to believe that the loss to Ireland is not irreparable. We find it hard to believe that we will see in our time a man who will give the Irish workers such brave and disinterested service—who will give, as Connolly gave them, his mind, his heart, his life. He made a discovery in Irish history and the workers of Ireland will be more and more influenced by that discovery—that the conquest of Ireland meant the social and political servitude of the Irish masses, and, therefore, the re-conquest of Ireland must mean the social as well as the political independence of every man, woman and child in Ireland. In other words, the common ownership of all Ireland by *all* the Irish.

PADRAIC COLUM.

### *Connolly's Statement to the Court-Martial*

I do not wish to make any defence except against charges of wanton cruelty to prisoners. These trifling allegations that have been made, if they record facts that really happened, deal only with the almost unavoidable incidents of a hurried uprising against long-established authority, and nowhere show evidence of set purpose wantonly to injure unarmed persons.

### *James Connolly*

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We went out to break the connection between this country and the British Empire and to establish an Irish Republic. We believe that the call we then issued to the people of Ireland was a nobler call in a holier cause than any call issued to them during this war having any connection with the war.

We succeeded in proving that Irishmen are ready to die endeavoring to win for Ireland those national rights which the British Government has been asking them to die to win for Belgium. As long as that remains the case the cause of Irish freedom is safe.

Believing that the British Government has no right in Ireland, never had any right in Ireland and never can have any right in Ireland, the presence in any one generation of Irishmen of even a respectable minority, ready to die to affirm that truth, makes that government forever an usurpation and a crime against human progress.

I personally thank God that I have lived to see the day when thousands of Irish men and boys, and hundreds of Irish women and girls, were ready to affirm that truth and to attest it with their lives if need be.



## CHAPTER XX

SEAN McDERMOTT

**T**HE last time I saw Sean McDermott was in a prison cell at Kilmainham Jail, Dublin, at 3 o'clock on the morning of May 12th. He was shot at 3.45 on the same morning. My sister and I were called from our house at 11 p. m. on the previous night by an armed messenger who carried a despatch from one Major Lennon, saying the prisoner "John" McDermott desired to see us. A military motor car conveyed us to the prison. It would take the pen of some great Russian realist to picture that awful drive through the night, through the streets of Dublin lined with British sentries with their drawn bayonets. The houses were in darkness and there was a hushed silence in the streets. Save for the whizz of our car and the sharp cry of "Halt!" every few yards, as we approached the sentries, there was no sound. The most awful mo-



SOME JOURNALS OF REVOLUTION; AND "THE IRISH CITIZEN,"  
THE ORGAN OF WOMAN-SUFFRAGE EDITED BY SHEEHY-  
SKEFFINGTON.

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*Sean McDermott*

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ment was when the shout of the sentries and the noise of the car ceased and the door was silently opened for us to dismount and we found ourselves in front of a great, dark, treacherous looking building, Kilmainham Jail. The thought that here, in this ill-starred fortress, we were going to say good-bye for ever to one of our dearest friends, stunned us. After various ceremonies we were admitted inside the big iron-studded door, and led to Sean's cell. The cell was small. Black and white, I believe, were the colours. The walls were white-washed, the floor was also fairly white. The door must have been black. There was a raised board in one corner—called a plank bed. There was a small rough table near the light on which was placed a tall brass candlestick with a very yellow candle dripping down over it, and a pen and ink and paper. There was a plain wooden stool in front of the table. On the plank bed were a couple of soiled blankets. That was the furniture of the room in which one of the noblest of men spent the last hours of life.

The one discordant element in the setting was the prisoner. As he came to the door with both hands extended, to welcome us, with a

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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smile on his face that seemed to transcend the brutal place, one felt fortitude and confidence in oneself once more and a strong desire to show no surprise at the unusual scene. Somehow we all acted as if this was one of the places where we had been accustomed to visit each other. Even the two soldiers who were on guard in the cell during the three hours we were there, seemed nothing unusual—though somewhat irritating, as any superfluous company is. We sat on the plank bed beside Sean. We discussed many of the events of the revolution. He told us of what had happened to them after they had been burnt out of the Post Office, the insults hurled at them by the most “civilised” of armies when they had laid down their arms, the inhuman treatment they had received at Richmond Barracks. But it was not by way of complaint he told us of these things. He merely told them as a narrative of events, and personally seemed most indifferent to all their whips and scourges. I suppose he expected no better at the hands of the British military. He did not wish to dwell on these matters. He preferred to talk of all sorts of casual matters, asking about different people we knew, referring to various happy

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*Sean McDermott*

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events of the past, and enjoying little jokes and jests almost as naturally as if we were in Bewley's<sup>1</sup> or in an ordinary sitting-room in one of our houses. He spoke with much affection of several young men and women he used to meet with us, and the most pathetic scene was where he tried to produce keepsakes for different girl friends of his we mentioned. He sat down at the table and tried to scratch his name and the date on the few coins he had left and on the buttons which he cut from his clothes with a penknife somewhat reluctantly provided by the young officer who stood by. As one looked at his beautiful head assiduously bent over this work in the dim candle-light, one could scarcely keep one's feelings from surging over at the thought that in another couple of hours that beautiful head would be battered by four bullets and that those deep, clear, thoughtful eyes would look on us no more. It was cruel, impossible! They could not shoot him! Surely something would prevent those eight soldiers from shooting a man of such bravery, nobility and simplicity of soul as he who sat at that table scratching his name on a button for some little

<sup>1</sup> A Dublin coffee-house.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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girl who begged to be remembered to him. At 3 o'clock, on the arrival of the Prison Chaplain, we bade farewell to Sean and left him to spend his last three-quarters of an hour in prayer and in preparation for a more lovely world.

Sean McDermott had an extremely beautiful head, black hair with deep blue eyes, dark eyebrows and long lashes and perfectly moulded nose, mouth and chin. An illness about four years ago left him lame and somewhat delicate constitutionally, and he often looked a little tired and frail. But it was not Sean's personal appearance that attracted people so much as his wonderful charm. He was extremely popular in all circles in which he moved. He was well known in Dublin, and there was not a town in Ireland, I believe, where Sean was not known and loved by some group of people—generally the representatives of Sinn Fein opinion in the district. He could enjoy himself in almost any setting and make every one around him feel at home. He possessed that ineffable gift of imagination which made him understand his surroundings, and he never came into a social gathering where he was not a distinct addition. With

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*Sean McDermott*

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these high social qualities and attractive personality, he never allowed himself to be lured from the rigid path of duty. His duty was his single-minded devotion to Ireland. Sean was eminently a patriot. He loved his country with a passion that at times I scarcely understood. I think he is one of the few young men whom no personal passion could ever have turned away from the work he had set before himself. Full of energy, courage, hope and perseverance, he worked and planned for the independence of Ireland ever since his boyhood. He had tremendous vitality in spite of his delicacy and executed a wonderful amount of work. For the last year his office was always crowded with callers about business in connection with the Volunteers. People came from all parts of the country to consult him on important matters. He seemed to be a sort of general secretary of several unnamed societies. Secrecy was his watchword; he never talked of the business he did with others. I would venture to say that Sean McDermott did more than any other man in the work of preparation for this revolution. Practically all the other leaders had professions or business to attend to, but he did nothing else but



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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work for the one object, and yet he was one of the busiest men I have ever met. Since Xmas I have often known him to attend five or six meetings in the course of an afternoon and evening. I feel certain he has gone to his grave with more of the secrets of how the whole plan was developed than any other leader.

Sean was not at all a literary man, he was not even well read. But anything in literature that pertained to the love of Ireland, immediately gripped his soul. He could recite a poem of Davis or Rooney with the vigor and fire of an enthusiast; he could speak with exceptional ability on Mitchell's "Jail Journal" and Doheny's "Felons' Track," and he could make a speech on the life of Emmet and Tone with such vigor and conviction that he left his audience aghast at their comparative inactivity.

He died as he lived. The last words of his address to his countrymen were: God Save Ireland. His death seemed to come to him as naturally as anything else he had done for Ireland. He never once flinched. At 4 o'clock on that Friday morning when the shooting party had done their work, a gentle rain began

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*Sean McDermott*

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to fall. I remember feeling that at last there was some harmony in Nature. These were most assuredly the tears of our Dark Rosaleen over one of her most beloved sons. They seemed as naturally to be the tribute of tears of some gentle mourner as were those of his friends who came asking for a button from his clothes or a coin on which he had scratched his name or a thread from the scarf which he wore round his neck. His beautiful body lies quicklimed and uncoffined in a trench behind Arbor Hill. His spirit lives stronger than ever among his fellow countrymen and his name will go down forever in the pages of our history.

MARY JOSEPHINE RYAN.

Dublin, July, 1916.

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## CHAPTER XXI

FRANCIS SHEEHY-SKEFFINGTON <sup>1</sup>

**F**RANCIS SHEEHY-SKEFFINGTON had in the highest degree the quality of devotion—of heroic devotion. He was for the oppressed nationality, the oppressed class, the oppressed sex, the oppressed man. No Irishman fought the battle for liberty at so many points as did this eager, buoyant man. I shall remember him as the happiest spirit I ever knew. He fought for liberty with a sort of angelic courage—austere, gay, uncompromising. His first student pamphlet was a plea for women's suffrage, and from the time he wrote it he was in the forefront of every liberalizing movement in Ireland.

It was in 1899 that this pamphlet was published. An Irish Theatre was then being heralded. People were willing to consider what

<sup>1</sup> Francis Sheehy-Skeffington was born in Bailieborough, Co. Cavan, in 1878. His family came from Co. Down; he was an only son.—Ed.



**F. SHEEHY-SKEFFINGTON**



**THE O'RAHILLY**



**MICHAEL O'HANRAHAN**



**JOHN MACBRIDE**

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*Francis Sheehy-Skeffington*

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an audacious student of University College had to say by way of an attack upon what Mr. Yeats, Mr. Moore and Mr. Martyn were doing. And that attack, "The Day of the Rabblement," by James Joyce, was printed (for economy's sake) with "A Plea for Women's Suffrage," by Francis Skeffington.

The appearance of this plea for women's suffrage was significant. Here was a young student of the popular University College asking Irish Nationalists to consider a wide question of human liberation. In Ireland, as in Great Britain at the time, the enfranchisement of women seemed something incredible. The "Woman's Rights Man" was a figure for the comic artist. Therefore, the youth who wrote this plea for women's suffrage showed originality and boldness as well as a clear-minded interest in social questions.

When the writer of this plea for women's suffrage married he adopted his wife's family name and made himself known as Francis Sheehy-Skeffington. There was nothing inconsistent or disjointed in his views. It was his logic and his consistency that were most maddening to his opponents. With his beard and his knickerbockers, with his courage and

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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his singleness of idea he became almost a fabulous figure in Dublin. He had no following and he belonged wholly to no group. Yet there were powerful associations that were less dreaded than this solitary fighter.

How he baffled the managers of the public meeting at which Premier Asquith was to make his pronouncement upon Home Rule became one of the Dublin Nights' Entertainments. It had been settled that Mr. Asquith was not to be affronted by having the question of women's suffrage raised at this meeting. Strict orders were given that Francis Sheehy-Skeffington was to be kept outside, even if the Mansion House had to be surrounded with barbed wire entanglements. Men who knew him were put at the doors. And at the crucial moment of the meeting his well-known voice was heard in question: "What provision is the Prime Minister going to make as to women's suffrage in the proposed bill?" The meeting was in an uproar. "It is Skeffington!" "How did he get in?" "Throw him out!" Search was made, but it was some time before the interruptor was discovered. He was disguised as a Church of Ireland clergyman!

A man is known by his heroes and Francis

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*Francis Sheehy-Skeffington*

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Sheehy-Skeffington's hero was Michael Davitt. He has written a fascinating life of the man whom he describes as "Revolutionary, Agitator, Labour Leader."<sup>1</sup> His conception of Davitt's character and Davitt's mission is indicated by the key-sentences he has put for a preface to the book—sentences which make his own confession of a social faith.

The Land League represented the triumph of what was forgiving over what was revengeful in my Celtic temperament.

I would not purchase liberty for Ireland at the price of giving one vote against the liberty of the republics of South Africa.

Make no mistake about it, my Lord Bishop of Limerick, Democracy is going to rule in these countries.

These are the sentences, written or spoken, that made him at one with Michael Davitt. Justice cannot be obtained by working out animosities. Liberty is indivisible and cannot be obtained for Ireland by an act of treason towards liberty in another part of the world.

<sup>1</sup> Michael Davitt, by F. Sheehy-Skeffington, London: Fisher Unwin.



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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The people are bound to come to their own in each country of the British Islands.

When the European war broke out, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington was working for women's suffrage and for the improvement of labour conditions in Dublin. An attempt was made to sweep the manhood of Ireland into the war by talking a great deal about the wrong done to Belgium and about the Allies being the protectors of the rights of small nationalities. Francis Sheehy-Skeffington made an intervention. He began to ask publicly what interest Ireland had in a victory of the Allies which actually would mean a strengthening of the power that exploited her. He asked what the Allies proposed to do for the small nationality called Ireland. He founded a Neutrality League, which took the position that Ireland, morally and intellectually, should be as neutral as Holland or Denmark. Sunday after Sunday he spoke against recruiting.

In the summer of 1915 he was arrested and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. He declared from the dock that he would neither eat nor drink while he was in prison, and that, living or dead, he would be out of gaol in a fortnight. He carried out his programme

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*Francis Sheehy-Skeffington*

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with his usual courage and consistency. He neither ate nor drank. His great torture was from thirst. At last he became so weakened that he had to be taken into the Infirmary. Subsequently he was discharged under what was known as "The Cat and Mouse Act"—he was to be imprisoned again as soon as the authorities considered that he was well enough to undergo another term of imprisonment with a hunger and thirst strike.

He went over to Wales, and afterwards to America. He wrote and lectured here last fall, and everywhere his sincerity, his courage, and his information impressed people. He went back to Ireland declaring he would be in gaol for Christmas. He thought that if the government decided to apply conscription to Ireland they would put him in prison, and that if there was to be no question of conscription they would leave him at liberty.

A fortnight before the insurrection broke out he wrote to the London *New Statesman* warning the democracy of Great Britain that the militarists in Dublin were bent upon provoking an insurrectionary movement. He was then engaged on a book which he did not live to complete, but of which a fragment even

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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will be important—*An Irish Commonwealth in relation to an International Polity.*

When the insurrection broke out Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, the Pacifist, made it his business to counsel the more ungovernable classes against looting.<sup>1</sup> He went amongst the people, advising humanity, restraint, honesty. One evening on his way to the home where his wife and child waited for him, he was taken by the military. What happened then was told at the trial of Captain Bowen-Colthurst for his murder.

From the evidence of Lieut. Morris, 11th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment:

He was in command of a picket of thirty men. "There was a crowd on the road between ourselves and Jacob's factory, and Mr. Sheehy-Skeffington came from among that crowd, walking in my direction. He was practically

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<sup>1</sup> On Tuesday, the 25th, Skeffington was seen posting the following notice at various places in Dublin:

Where there are no regular police on the streets it becomes the duty of the citizens to police the streets themselves and to prevent such spasmodic looting as has taken place in a few streets. Civilians (men and women) who are willing to co-operate to this end are asked to attend at Westmoreland Chambers (over Eden Bros.) at five o'clock this (Tuesday) afternoon.

FRANCIS SHEEHY-SKEFFINGTON.

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### *Francis Sheehy-Skeffington*

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alone in the centre of the street, but there were people following him. I ordered two of my men to arrest him and take him to the barracks. The crowd on the bridge fell back, and some one shouted out his name."

"Was Mr. Sheehy-Skeffington armed?" "Not to my knowledge."

From the evidence of Lieut. Morgan, 3rd Royal Irish Rifles, stationed at Portobello Barracks:

"About 8:15 that evening Sergt. Maxwell brought him in. I asked Sheehy-Skeffington if he was a Sinn Feiner. He said he was not. I asked him if he was in favor of the Sinn Fein movement, and he said he was in sympathy with the Sinn Feiners, but that he was not in favor of militarism. I reported that he had been arrested and that I had not been furnished with the charge against him."

Lieut. L. Wilson said on Tuesday night witness and a party of forty men under the command of Capt. Bowen-Colthurst went out between 10 and 11 o'clock. They had Mr. Sheehy-Skeffington with them.

"Why was Mr. Sheehy-Skeffington with the party?"

"He was taken out as a hostage."

"Where did you go?" "We went to Kelly's corner—to Kelly's tobacconist shop."

"Did Captain Bowen-Colthurst leave you there with

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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the men and with Skeffington?" "He left me at Portobello Bridge with Skeffington and about twenty men, and he went off with the other twenty."

"What orders did he give you?" "That if any of his men were fired upon I was to shoot Skeffington immediately."

Witness, continuing, said accused also left orders that if he (accused) were knocked out witness was to take command. It was understood he was going to raid Kelly's shop, and when he returned he had prisoners with him, two of whom were Dickson and McIntyre,<sup>1</sup> two editors. They were taken to the guard-room and searched.

Sergt. J. W. Aldridge, 10th Royal Dublin Fusiliers, said during Easter week he was attached to the Royal Irish Rifles in Portobello Barracks. At 9 A. M. on April 26 he relieved a sergeant of the R. I. R., named Kelly—now at the front—in the guard-room. There were twelve civilian prisoners there, eleven of whom were in the detention-room and one in a cell. The one in the cell witness afterwards found was Sheehy-Skeffington. At 10:20 A. M. Captain Bowen-Colthurst, whom witness had never seen in his life before, to his knowledge, came in and said he wanted the men named

<sup>1</sup> Dickson and McIntyre had no connection whatever with the rebellion. It is said they were Unionists.

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*Francis Sheehy-Skeffington*

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McIntyre, Dickson and Skeffington. They were produced and he ordered them out to the yard. He ordered seven of the guard to come out also. These were all privates, all armed, and each carried 100 rounds of ammunition, while the magazines of their rifles were charged. Witness went out into the yard, and in his presence Captain Bowen-Colthurst told the prisoners to go to the far end of the yard, which they did. He then told the men to load by pulling off the "cut-offs" and pulling out the bolts of their rifles. He told them to present and fire. The three prisoners, to witness's belief, were shot dead.

"Were they shot together?" "Yes, sir."

"One volley?" "Yes."

Witness, continuing, said Capt. Bowen-Colthurst went straight away after the shooting and Lieut. Dobbin came in. Witness looked at the three bodies, and as far as he could see they were all dead.

"Did you see any spasms?" "No. I did not see any movement. All I could see was that the bullet had gone right through."

"Can you say that in respect of each one of the three?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did Lieut. Dobbin do?" "He came in, and at this time he thought there was a movement in Sheehy-Skeffington. He went away and came back in about

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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two minutes and there was another volley fired by four men at this one particular man." Witness's own impression was that the man was dead before the second volley was fired.

Lieut. Wm. P. Dobbin, 3rd Royal Irish Rifles, gave evidence of being in command of the guard at Portobello Barracks on April 26. He had eight civilian prisoners in the guard-room. Captain Bowen-Colthurst came that morning to the guard-room. Witness was at the time outside, near the gate. Accused came out of the guard-room again and said something to witness.

The Prosecutor—What was it?

Witness—To the best of my recollection he said, "I am taking these prisoners out of the guard-room, and I am going to shoot them. . . . I think," he added, "it is the right thing to do."

Major Jas. Rosborough, 3rd Royal Irish Rifles, stated that he was in command at Portobello Barracks on April 25 and 26 last. He had been in command from April 22.

"Was it reported to you that the prisoner Sheehy-Skeffington had been brought in?" "I have no recollection of that."

"Or McIntyre?" "I have no recollection of that."

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*Francis Sheehy-Skeffington*

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"Did you see Captain Bowen-Colthurst that evening?"  
"I can't say."

"Did you see him on the next morning?" "Yes; he came to me when I was crossing the barrack square and said that he had just shot three prisoners, and that he expected he would get into trouble."

"Did he say who or what the prisoners were?" "No, I don't remember him saying who the prisoners were."

"Did he say whether they were military or civilians?"  
"No, but I presumed that they were civilians."

"Did he say anything else?" "He said he possibly would get into trouble over the matter, and that they would possibly hang him, or words to that effect. I told him to report his action in writing."

"Did he do so?" "Yes, and he came to me afterwards and said that he thought the prisoners would escape or be rescued."

Witness added that he was also told that the three men who had been shot had been taken to hospital, and he asked the adjutant about their burial.

Witness stated that he did not consider the accused abnormally excited when he stated that he had shot three men.

Skeffington refused to have his eyes bandaged, one of the soldiers told his wife. He raised his hand before his eyes when the volley was being fired and he was shot through hand and brain. They buried him in their barrack yard as gunmen might bury their vic-



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tim. What courage, what gaiety, what insight they then shot out of the world! Courage killed by brutality, gaiety killed by bludgeon-armed authority, insight killed by ignorance!

The whole social life of the New Ireland will be less free and less prosperous because we shall not have Francis Sheehy-Skeffington's criticism and Francis Sheehy-Skeffington's courageous actions.

PADRAIC COLUM.

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## CHAPTER XXII

THOMAS J. CLARKE

**O**F all the men who have been done to death to satisfy and gratify the majesty of British authority for their participation in the recent rebellion in Ireland, Thomas J. Clarke suffered most for the country of his heart's love. It is safe to say also that not one of all those devoted and earnest men loved Ireland more intensely than he did or sacrificed as much for the principles of Irish National Independence. For more than fifteen and a half years Tom Clarke endured the special tortures to which Irish political prisoners are subjected in English jails, and when he was admitted to liberty on ticket of leave, although his body bore the evidence of the cruel treatment he had received at the hands of his British jailers, his spirit remained unbroken and undaunted.

The first time I met Tom Clarke was at an

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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Irish meeting in New York in 1899. That meeting between Tom and myself was the beginning of an acquaintance which ripened into the warmest friendship. His unselfish earnestness impressed me at once, and, like thousands of others, I loved and admired him for the sufferings which he had endured unflinchingly for the Irish cause.

Although he had been immured in English dungeons for his devotion to Ireland during what was practically half the average lifetime of a man, he wanted no favors from his fellow-Irishmen on that account; all he wished for was an opportunity to earn a livelihood in a manly and independent way, and he never received a dollar from any one who ever employed him without giving a great deal more than a dollar's worth of service in return.

Thomas J. Clarke was an Irishman, born out of Ireland. During the early years of our acquaintance I thought his birthplace was Dungannon in the County Tyrone, but I remember distinctly an incident which occurred when he returned one day to the *Gaelic American* office, where he was employed as book-keeper, with his citizenship papers, which he had got in Brooklyn, where he then resided.



**THOMAS J. CLARKE**



**SEAN McDERMOTT**



**J. J. HEUSTON**



**CORNELIUS COLBERT**

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*Thomas J. Clarke*

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He was very happy at having thrown off the last semblance of allegiance to the British Crown. I said to him in a bantering way, "Tom, I'm glad you're one of us at last," meaning that he was an American citizen. "I'm glad, too, Reidy," he replied, "but I had to make a very embarrassing admission in order to get my papers." "What was that, Tom?" I asked. "I had to acknowledge," he said, "that I was born in England." I told him I had all along believed that he was a native of Tyrone. "Yes," he said, "I consider myself a Tyrone man, as I was brought up there since I was a child, but I was born in an English garrison town, where my father, an Irishman, who was a sergeant in the British army, was stationed." He then told me how his father had won the Victoria Cross for gallantry in action in the Crimea, and, on being pensioned, had got an appointment as caretaker of an arsenal or some kind of military depot in Dungannon. This little job and his pension were taken away from the elder Clarke by the generous British Government when the son (Tom) was convicted of treason felony in 1883.

The place of his nativity was the cause of

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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further annoyance to Tom when he went to register before the next election. The Registry clerk asked him the usual questions, among them, "Where were you born?" Tom hesitatingly answered, "In England." "Oh, you're an Englishman, then?" the Registry clerk said. "No," roared Tom, in a voice that startled the official; "I'm an Irishman." "But," the Registry clerk said, "you just said that you were born in England." "Yes," said Tom, "but the accident of birth makes no difference, and I want to be put down as an Irishman."

In 1881, when he was about twenty-three years of age, Thomas J. Clarke came to the United States and settled in New York. For some years before he left Ireland he was a member of the secret revolutionary organization, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and, immediately after his arrival in this country, he became connected with the kindred movement here. Coercion was then in full force in Ireland, and the odious landlord system which had reduced the Irish agricultural population to a condition bordering on serfdom was supported by all the force at the command of the British Crown. The right of free speech and

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*Thomas J. Clarke*

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public meeting was denied the people of Ireland. Men were shot down, bludgeoned and imprisoned by the military and police, and the blood of the Irish race was up. Acts like those perpetrated in the name of British law in Ireland in the 'eighties provoke reprisals in every country, so it came to pass that early in 1883 Thomas J. Clarke, alias Henry Hammond Wilson, together with Dr. Gallagher, Alfred Whitehead and John Curtin, was arrested in England charged with being in the possession of explosives. They were convicted of treason felony at the Old Bailey, London, in April of that year, and all four were sentenced to penal servitude for life by Chief Justice Coleridge and two other judges. Gallagher and Whitehead were afterwards driven insane by the inhuman treatment which they received in prison. The former is now an inmate of an insane asylum on Long Island, and Whitehead, who came to this country several years ago and disappeared, has never been heard of since.

The trial of the four prisoners lasted a week, and after sentence was pronounced, they were driven through a hostile, howling English mob, from the courthouse to Millbank prison.



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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There, after the usual preliminaries had been gone through, the rules were read to them. The rule which impressed Clarke most at the time was that regarding silence. It read: "Strict silence must at all times be observed; under no circumstances must one prisoner speak to another."

While the Irish prisoners were confined in Millbank they were watched so closely that they never got a chance to speak to each other. Clarke was punished several times for attempting to talk to the others. They, however, exchanged notes in spite of the vigilance of the prison officials. The lower pivots of the gates of the cells in Millbank were imbedded in lead. A little of this lead when dug out made a very good pencil, and with those pencils and the regulation brown paper used in the prison, they were equipped for carrying on correspondence. They rolled the paper after they had written on it into a ball, and frequently, under the noses of the guards, shot those little balls as you would a marble through the cell gates. While in Millbank the Irish prisoners were never once caught exchanging those notes, although they had

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*Thomas J. Clarke*

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frequently to slip the balls of paper into their mouths while being searched.

Towards the close of 1883 Clarke, with other Irish prisoners, was removed from Millbank to Chatham prison. There, in the chapel one morning, he saw John Daly,<sup>1</sup> whom he had met some years before in the North of Ireland and later in the United States. James F. Egan, who died City Marshal of Dublin a few years ago, was sentenced with Daly and was in Chatham at the same time. Clarke, Daly and Egan became fast friends and helped to cheer each other during the long and terrible years of the incarceration, and lightened for each other the awful burden of existence in English prisons.

Describing the systematic starvation to which the Irish political prisoners particularly were subjected, Tom Clarke once told me a story which conveyed a lasting impression as to the terrible pangs of hunger he must have suffered. "I had made a pet of a little bird," he said, "which used to fly to the window sill of my cell to pick up a crumb that I nearly always saved for it from my miserable

<sup>1</sup> Since this article was written, John Daly has died in Limerick.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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meal. One day, after disposing of the prison allowance of bread, and saving, as usual, the last crumb for my little feathered friend, I placed it on the window ledge. For some reason the bird did not come quickly and my hunger was so intense that I reached out and grabbed the little morsel of bread and ate it greedily. Talk of hunger and cold," he said; "many a time I was forced to chew the rags I got to clean my tin ware in order to allay my hunger. The temperature in the punishment cell in which I was frequently confined in the winter was below the freezing point."

Of all the diabolical schemes of the prison officials to drive the Irish prisoners insane, Tom told me frequently that the "no sleep" torture was the worst. An officer inspected the Irish prisoners every hour during the night and banged the doors when leaving their cells, thus making it impossible for them to rest. Clarke saw his Irish fellow prisoners, one by one, break down and go mad under the brutal treatment to which they were subjected. Describing this part of his prison experiences, he says in an article printed in a Dublin paper, "Can I ever forget the night poor Whitehead realized that he was going mad? There,

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*Thomas J. Clarke*

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in the stillness, between two of the hourly inspections, I heard the poor fellow fight against insanity, cursing England and English brutality from the bottom of his heart, and beseeching God to strike him dead sooner than allow him to lose his reason. Such episodes are ineffaceable in the memory; they burn their impress into a man's soul."

Clarke at one time thought he himself was going insane under the terrible strain. While in his cell he became conscious of a buzzing sound in his ears, and feared that the breaking point had at last arrived—that he too was going the same way as Dr. Gallagher, Alfred Whitehead and several others had gone. He slapped his ears again and again to try and get rid of the noise, but without avail. While outside his cell and in the yard the noise didn't trouble him, but when in his cell it was persistent. It was with a great feeling of relief he discovered that the noise came from a new telegraph wire which was fastened over his cell and that the buzzing sound did not come as a forerunner of mental collapse.

While in Chatham, Tom Clarke evolved a new telegraph code by means of which the Irish prisoners, tapping on their cell walls,

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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were able to communicate with each other. Through this method of communication Clarke first noticed that Dr. Gallagher and Whitehead were "acting queerly." He declared several times that they had been insane for seven or eight years before they were released, and that every official in Chatham prison knew of their insanity.

I have heard Clarke more than once tell of the efforts made by Inspector Littlechild of Scotland Yard to get him and the other Irish political prisoners who were confined in Chatham to give evidence in support of the charges made against the Irish leader, Charles Stewart Parnell, by the *London Times*—charges which were based on a forged letter written by the notorious Richard Piggott and to which Piggott appended the name of Mr. Parnell. Speaking of Littlechild's visit to him, I have heard Clarke say:

"Littlechild was all politeness, addressing me as 'Mr.' Wilson. This made me suspicious and I asked the Inspector: 'What's up? What brings you here?' Littlechild started in to talk about nothing in particular, but I cut in with: 'I say, Mr. Littlechild, never mind beating about the bush, just tell

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*Thomas J. Clarke*

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me what you want, and I will give you an answer.' Littlechild then attempted to get me to testify regarding certain alleged connections between the Irish Parliamentary Party and the Irish Revolutionary party in America, to the effect that they were working in harmony and that one party served the purposes of the other. He pointed out to me that there was no reason why I should not have a chance to testify as well as others he named, and wound up by saying, 'Now, I am ready to take down anything you wish to say.' "

Clarke's answer to Littlechild was brief and to the point. "Look here, Mr. Inspector, if a single word of information would get me out of here to-morrow, sooner than give it to you I'd prefer to remain here till the day of judgment. Please take that as final."

Clarke thought that was the end of the interview, but Littlechild was not to be choked off so easily. For three-quarters of an hour he coaxed, cajoled and threatened the prisoner. He impressed on Clarke that if he would do as he was told he would be given not only his freedom but a position in the Civil Service as well. But all to no avail. Clarke was not to be bribed or bulldozed, and the Inspector

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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went away disappointed, after requesting the prisoner to write him at Scotland Yard in case he should change his mind. Needless to say, Clarke never wrote to him.

While engaged in the stereotypers' department Clarke decided to print a newspaper, and despite the watchfulness of both the convicts and the keepers he managed to get out "*The Irish Felon*, printed and published at Her Majesty's Convict Prison, Chatham, by Henry Hammond Wilson." The leading article was as treasonable as could be, and in the "Poets' Corner" was a poem dedicated to Pontius Pilate, the nickname the Irish prisoners had for Governor Harris of the prison.

Many schemes were devised by the Irish political prisoners to get news from the outside world. As they were not allowed newspapers, Clarke determined to get some. While at work as a tinsmith in Portland Prison, to which he was transferred from Chatham, he was engaged in packing oil bottles which the prison was making for the Admiralty and managed to secrete a stick in one of the boxes with the following request scribbled on it in chalk: "For God's sake throw in a piece of newspaper—any old newspaper—

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*Thomas J. Clarke*

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and earn the gratitude of a long-term convict." The cases were all numbered, and when emptied were returned to the prison. The case in which Clarke placed the stick with the above request was duly sent out and returned, and sure enough when he saw the number 24 on the box and opened it, it was filled with papers. This was only one of many ruses invented by the Irish political prisoners to keep in touch with the outside world while undergoing their long terms of imprisonment.

Another scheme of the prison officials to cause the Irish prisoners unending annoyance was to put them to learn a new trade after they had mastered one. Tom Clarke has described the predicament in which he found himself frequently and has related his experience in learning tinsmithing. He had never been inside a tinsmith's shop, to say nothing of his want of knowledge of the trade, yet when he informed the officer of his lack of experience in that line of work and asked to be instructed in the use of the tools, he only got curses and abuse for his "stupidity."

The way in which the Irish prisoners were taught trades was to give them tools and tell



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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them to go ahead. And it was the custom for them to learn by watching their fellow convicts. When they had mastered the trade they were transferred to a different shop to learn another and be cursed at and abused while learning it. In this way Tom Clarke found himself from time to time employed as an iron moulder, stereotyper, japanner and stenciller, carpenter and joiner, tinsmith, wood turner, pattern maker—a continuous performance for almost sixteen years.

Tom told me frequently that it was only by keeping his mind occupied with different matters and forgetting his personal troubles that he kept himself from going insane. For instance, he got hold of a book on shorthand in the prison, learned the system, and copied and recopied the Old and New Testaments, which was one of the books that had been given him to read. Speaking of the books which the Irish political prisoners were supplied with, he often referred to the opportunities which the prison officials gave him and the other Irish prisoners of becoming intimately acquainted with juvenile literature. If Clarke applied for a book from the library, they would give him a boy's or girl's story book to

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*Thomas J. Clarke*

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read. When he complained to the Governor and asked for some works of an educational character the next time he was entitled to a library book he was given a volume of nursery rhymes! In the English prisons, too, all prisoners except the Irish political prisoners were allowed slates.

Tom Clarke was an optimist as well as an Irish patriot. He had a keen sense of humor, and even in the cruel English convict system he saw a bright and humorous side, although the bright spots in his prison life were not many—they were, as he himself has described them, “a few glimmering stars in a black, thunder-laden sky,” and he made the most of them.

Many a time I have heard him relate the antics of a prisoner who was nicknamed “Bobby Burns,” and tell of the standing contract which he had for years to supply moths for a tame spider which John Daly had in his cell and which Daly had taught to perform a number of tricks.

After his release from prison, on ticket of leave, which occurred on September 21st, 1898, Thomas J. Clarke lived for a few months in Ireland. While on a visit to his fel-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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low prisoner, John Daly, who had been released some time before Clarke and had been elected Mayor of Limerick, Tom met Daly's niece, Miss "Kattie" Daly, and they became engaged.

Clarke came to the United States in 1899 and secured a clerical job with a friend. Miss Daly followed later and after she landed they were married immediately and went to reside in Brooklyn.

Finding that he could earn more money at pattern making than at clerical work, and being anxious to surround his young wife with all the comforts possible, Tom Clarke, with characteristic grit, gave up the clerical position and tackled the more laborious job. I met him frequently at that time both at his home in Brooklyn and at Irish meetings. I never saw a more contented and happy couple than he and Mrs. Clarke were.

If Tom Clarke could speak to me from the place which I hope and pray he now occupies in the world beyond the stars, as I write lovingly and reverentially this sketch of his career, I am sure he would tell me not to omit from the narrative a few words of eulogy of this devoted wife, who with four children to

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*Thomas J. Clarke*

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care for, gave him willingly to Ireland's service.

It is no exaggeration to say that Mrs. Clarke is one of the most devoted and patriotic Irishwomen living. In her personality she represents the very best traditions of the women of the old city by the Shannon, who in 1691, with a heroism which has been an inspiration to the womanhood of Ireland from that time onward, bravely fought beside their men folk to drive the forces of King William back, broken and defeated, from the war-swept walls of Limerick.

While living in Brooklyn their eldest child, Daly, called after John Daly, was born to Mr. and Mrs. Clarke. He is now a boy of about sixteen.

When the *Gaelic American* was started on September 19, 1903, Tom Clarke became its first bookkeeper, and a more painstaking and efficient man never sat at a desk than he proved himself to be. During the years Tom was with the *Gaelic American* my intercourse with him was most intimate. One of the memories which I cherish very dearly is that Tom Clarke thought me worthy of his whole-hearted friendship; the respect and affection

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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which I entertained for him were returned in generous measure.

Early in 1907, feeling that his wife's health would be benefited by a change of scene and air, he got possession of a farm at Manorville, Long Island, and left the employment of the *Gaelic American*, much to the regret of every one connected with the paper.

In the spring of 1908 Mr. and Mrs. Clarke and their boy left for Ireland and he went into business as a tobacconist in Dublin, where he opened two shops. His place of business on Parnell Street, near the Rotunda, became the rendezvous for the militant Nationalists of the Irish capital and received much attention from the British Government detectives. During their residence in Dublin three other children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Clarke.

On arriving at the Irish capital, Clarke threw himself heart and soul into the movement for Irish Independence, and his influence in the counsels of the leaders was very great. When the final test came on Easter Monday, 1916, he was where he was always to be found when Ireland called—at the post of duty.

I can picture him in my mind's eye as he

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*Thomas J. Clarke*

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faced the British firing squad on May 3rd, proud, defiant and erect, just as Mangan, the Irish poet, depicted Hofer of Tyrol looking death in the eye on the ramparts of Mantua, refusing to kneel and giving the command, "You, slaves—fire!" to his executioners. I am sure that Tom Clarke died as he lived, like a True Man.

Tom had the greatest contempt for those who wanted to indulge in "patriotism" for profit. I remember distinctly an incident which occurred one day while he was book-keeper in the *Gaelic American* office. A young fellow, recently landed from Ireland, and who was anxious to be advised how to get along, called, and Tom took a kindly interest in him. They hadn't been long in conversation, however, when Tom was staggered by this question: "Which do you think is better for a young Irishman to join who wants to succeed in this country—the United Irish League or the Clan na Gael?" These two organizations, having policies diametrically opposed, were at loggerheads at the time, and needless to say the sympathies of Tom Clarke were with the militant society.

"Do you want a candid answer to that ques-

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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tion, young fellow?" inquired Tom. "I do, sir," said the late arrival from the old sod, who, if he was rather mixed in his patriotism, hadn't lost his manners.

"Well," said Tom, looking the *gorsoon* over carefully, "my candid opinion is that you're not fit for either of them," and he turned to his work while the young exile of Erin walked out of the office, evidently conscious of the fact that he had "put his foot in it."

Although on the records of English courts and English prisons the name of Thomas J. Clarke is written as that of a criminal, it has never been my lot to meet a more upright or honorable man, or a truer friend. I have never met one more consistently devoted to principle than he was, one who had greater contempt for compromise or expediency where a principle was involved, or who more faithfully discharged any duty which he undertook to perform. In giving my impressions of Tom Clarke I write the honorable record of one who was both a man and a patriot, and whose manhood and patriotism were unpurchasable. Beannacht De le n-anam.

JAMES REIDY.

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## CHAPTER XXIII

JOSEPH MARY PLUNKETT

**W**HEN one saw Joseph Mary Plunkett for the first time one was inclined to think that illness had made inroads on all his powers. But one was soon made to feel that this frail youth had a conqueror's will. The friendship between him and MacDonagh was one of the finest I ever knew of. MacDonagh's influence, I should think, brought him from the study into affairs. Not that the poet who was to write the proudest poem of Irish defiance had to be converted to Nationalism or shown the way to act a part in an Irish national movement. But MacDonagh brought him into activities that continually added to his qualities of decision and command. Five years ago, I remember, MacDonagh told me that a lady had called at St. Enda's to ask him to help her son with his Irish studies. The lady was Madame Plunkett. MacDonagh consented and his pupil became his admirer



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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and his friend. Joseph Mary Plunkett was then working hard at verse and was engaged in some out-of-the-way studies.

He published his book of verse, "The Circle and the Sword," in 1913. Afterwards he and Thomas MacDonagh took over *The Irish Review*. They formed a little literary theatre and produced plays written in their own circle, with some European masterpieces. Tchekhov's "Uncle Vanya" was amongst the plays they produced. Joseph Plunkett joined the Volunteers on their formation and was given a command and a place on the executive. I saw him in New York in September, 1915, and was impressed by the decision and the command he had attained to.

Joseph Mary Plunkett belonged to the Catholic branch of a family whose name has been in Irish history for six hundred years. His people remained loyal to the faith and the aspiration of the majority of the Irish people, and for that they had memories of dispossession and repression. But their most cherished memory was that of martyrdom. The Venerable Oliver Plunkett, the last priest martyred in England, was of their family. The young man who was shot to death in Dub-



**JOSEPH MARY PLUNKETT AND HIS WIFE (née GRACE GIFFORD)**

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*Joseph Mary Plunkett*

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lin was a mystic, but he was a militant mystic—his symbols were the eternal circle and the destroying sword. He would war for Ireland, and he would have the Irish people make war out of “the anger of the Sons of God.”

The poem I have spoken of as the proudest poem of Irish defiance is:

OUR HERITAGE

This heritage to the race of Kings:  
Their children and their children's seed  
Have wrought their prophecies in deed  
Of terrible and splendid things.

The hands that fought, the hearts that broke  
In old immortal tragedies,  
These have not failed beneath the skies,  
Their children's heads refuse the yoke.

And still their hands shall guard the sod  
That holds their father's funeral urn,  
Still shall their hearts volcanic burn  
With anger of the Sons of God.

No alien sword shall earn as wage  
The entail of their blood and tears,  
No shameful price for peaceful years  
Shall ever part this heritage.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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It is stupid to think that the pride that is behind this poem could be quelled by machine guns and military dictators.<sup>1</sup>

PADRAIC COLUM.

<sup>1</sup> One of the most pathetic stories of the rebellion is that of Plunkett's marriage. He was married to Miss Grace Gifford in Richmond Barracks at midnight, a few hours before he was shot. A sister of his bride was the wife of Thomas MacDonagh.

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## CHAPTER XXIV

### WILLIAM PEARSE

**T**HE few people in America who know anything about Ireland and the Irish Renaissance, must have known something about William Pearse and his work before the recent rebellion was even dreamt of. William Pearse, a sculptor by profession and a poet in temperament, was, like his brother Padraic, an idealist. And by reason of his achievements he was one of the foremost men in the art and literary movement that has given Ireland her unique place in the world of culture to-day. Pearse was an annual exhibitor at the Royal Hibernian Academy, but he found time to teach modelling at St. Enda's College, of which his brother was Headmaster, and to act as Manager of the Leinster Stage Society, which gave annual performances of Irish and other plays at the Abbey Theatre and other centres.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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William Pearse was no ordinary man, no idle dreamer, no fanatical revolutionary, but one who combined the qualities of a dreamer with the qualities of a man of action, and worked unceasingly that he might leave the world better than he found it. In person he was tall, well built, dignified and distinguished looking, and carried about with him an atmosphere of good will and benevolence. He was the personification of gentleness, yet in that gentleness there was a strength that the strongest of us might envy. Indeed it is very doubtful if an unkind thought ever entered his mind. To him it would not occur to speak unkindly, or inflict the slightest injury, deserved or undeserved, on any one. Truly it might be said that he was one of those highly civilized Irishmen whom G. K. Chesterton tells us about in his book on George Bernard Shaw. To me he was the embodiment of the Christian ideal; he only looked for the good in his fellow men, and did not bother with their faults.

It was in the modelling room of the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art that I met him for the first time, and there we studied together for two years. And there one day I told him

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*William Pearse*

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of a conversation I had with George Russell about the Cork Art Club, and how Russell believed that with the material we had in Cork it would be possible to have a distinct school of art there. And out of this conversation we developed new ideas, and laid plans for an art movement which would involve the establishment of an Irish national school of art, something different from an Irish school of artists. It was our desire to do for Irish art what W. B. Yeats had done for Irish drama, and that Irish artists should draw inspiration from Irish sources, particularly history and mythology, and decorate our public buildings with frescos and sculpture, illustrating the deeds of the mighty dead.

After the day's work in the modelling room, it was the custom to hold discussions, and every personality from Confucius to Mohammed, and from Mohammed to the latest President of the United States was discussed, and every subject from the art of the cubists, or lack of it, if you will, to the latest scientific discovery received attention. Nothing was too big or too little to interest us. There we would hear all about poor Synge from those who knew him, and about George Moore,



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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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George Russell and the latest arrival in the field of art or letters. And the one who inspired most of the discussion was William Pearse, because something interesting was always happening in the world in which he dwelt.

Pearse was undemonstrative, shy, and quiet; but he had a keen sense of the incongruous, and very little escaped his observation. His gentle bearing immediately commanded respect, and to know him was to like him. The trivialities that occupied other men's attention had no interest for him. He seemed to live on a higher plane than most men, and to live there because he could not live anywhere else. Some men acquire character and goodness, but Pearse was born with both. Of the arts, he liked the drama best, and often expressed a wish to become a professional actor.

I have many pleasant recollections of him. We often strolled together through the old parts of Dublin made sacred by the memory of other men who had died for Ireland, and as we rambled through long, winding streets and narrow lanes, we wondered when England would be awakened to a sense of her

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*William Pearse*

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duty towards the country that she so often tried to crush, but failed to conquer.

Pearse had a great admiration for Robert Emmet, and when I paid my last visit to his home, The Hermitage, Rathfarnham, we walked through the beautiful grounds where Emmet and Sarah Curran walked more than a century before, and when we came to a stone that marked the spot where a favorite hunter of Sarah Curran's lay buried, we lingered a while and spoke of Emmet and his aspirations. Rich to me in memories was Rathfarnham then, but doubly rich now. The rebellion of 1916 will not soon be forgotten, and the lover of freedom and liberty of another generation will journey to Rathfarnham, and learn the story of Padraic and William Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh, Joseph Plunkett, and all those who thought that life was too little to give for Ireland. Poets they were, both one and all, but their deeds were mightier than their words. *"They shall be remembered forever."*

SEUMAS O'BRIEN.

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## APPENDIX

### HOW IRELAND IS PLUNDERED

**T**HE following statement has been published by the Irish Financial Relations Committee, Mansion House, Dublin:

In 1896 the FINANCIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION, appointed by the British Government, reported that the annual over-taxation of Ireland was at the rate of **TWO AND THREE-QUARTER MILLIONS** of pounds sterling.<sup>1</sup>

The following table shows how the taxation of Ireland has been further increased:

	Total Taxation. £	Taxation per head of Population. £ s. d.		
1896 .....	8,034,384	1	15	1
1912 (Home Rule Bill introduced) .....	10,688,289	2	8	9

<sup>1</sup> That is, nearly \$15,000,000!

### *Appendix*

	£	£	s.	d.
1914 (before Anglo-German War).....	11,134,500	2	10	10
1915 .....	12,389,500	2	16	8
1916 <sup>1</sup> .....	17,457,000	4	4	0

### **DEBT AND DEBT CHARGE**

(First Year of Union, 1801)

	£	£	s.	d.
National Debt of Ireland .....	28,238,000	5	7	0
National Debt of England .....	450,505,000	42	18	0

On the destruction of the Napoleonic power and the banishment of Napoleon to St. Helena, England, in violation of her pledges, suppressed the separate Irish Exchequer, and made Ireland jointly responsible for the "National" Debt. Result:

	£	s.	d.
Debt charged to Ireland and England, 1914.....	£707,654,000	15	12 6

<sup>1</sup> This estimate issued by the British Government does not appear to include Post Office, etc., receipts ("Non-tax" Revenue). They are included in the previous figures. The real amount of increased taxation on the same basis would appear to be much higher.

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

	£	s.	d.
Decrease of Debt per head to Englishmen .....	27	5	6
Increase to Irishmen.....	10	5	6
Annual Debt charge per head in Ireland, 1801 .....	0	4	8
Annual Debt charge per head in England, 1801.....	1	13	9
Annual Debt charge per head in Ireland and England, 1914....	0	10	5
Decrease to Englishmen per head	1	3	4
Increase to Irishmen per head....	0	5	9

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### POPULATION

#### IRELAND

1801	1845	1896	1911
5,395,456	8,295,026	4,542,061	4,383,608

#### GREAT BRITAIN

10,500,957	19,484,352	34,765,000	40,831,396
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#### POPULATION TO THE SQUARE MILE

Ireland (1801) .....	166
England (1801) .....	152
Ireland (1911) .....	135
England (1911) .....	618

On the basis of the increase in Irish population from 1801 to 1845, the present population of Ireland should be 17,000,000.

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### *Appendix*

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The **actual loss** of Ireland in population between 1845 and 1915 is **3,912,000**.

The **real loss** of Ireland in population between 1845 and 1911 is **8,705,000**.

This real loss in population represents a **capital loss in money** of £2,176,000,000 (i. e., £250 per head lost).

Since the Union, Ireland paid as Rent to absentee landlords a sum estimated at £1,000,000,000.

This money was a **dead loss to Ireland**, being spent almost entirely out of the country.

**IRELAND EXCEEDS IN POPULATION** the independent kingdoms and republics of Chili, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, **Denmark**, Ecuador, **Greece**, Guatemala, Honduras, **Montenegro**, Nicaragua, **Norway**, Panama, Paraguay, Salvador, **Serbia**, **Switzerland**, and Uruguay.

**IRELAND EXCEEDS IN AREA** the independent kingdoms and states of **Belgium**, **Denmark**, **Holland**, **Serbia**, **Montenegro**, and **Switzerland**.

**IRELAND EXCEEDS IN REVENUE** the independent kingdoms and republics of Bolivia, **Bulgaria**, Chili, Columbia, Cost Rica, Cuba, **Denmark**, Ecuador, **Greece**, Guatemala,

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### *The Irish Rebellion*

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Honduras, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Roumania, Salvador, Serbia, Switzerland, and Uruguay.

SINCE THE WAR  
the taxation of Ireland has been increased by  
£6,322,000.

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Since the Union, Ireland has been plundered  
by England to the following extent:

	£
Overtaxation from 1801 to 1896..	300,000,000
Overtaxation from 1896 to 1916..	60,000,000
Absentee Rents .....	1,000,000,000
	<hr/>
	£1,360,000,000

Add to this the Capital Loss in Money due to  
loss of population (£2,176,000,000), and we have  
a Total Loss to Ireland of

**THREE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND  
THIRTY-SIX MILLIONS.**

#### **THE NEW WAR TAXES**

Estimate of the "True" Irish Revenue for  
Next Two Years.

1916-17 .....	£20,714,264
1917-18 .....	£19,910,898

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### *Appendix*

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The increased taxation consequent on the war means that the Irish people have had to pay extra taxes on Tea, Sugar, Beer, Spirits, Tobacco, etc., etc., and on their Incomes. These taxes will be further increased, and new taxes, probably on the Land, will be introduced if the Irish people submit tamely to this shameful robbery.

The extra taxation affects every individual in Ireland already hit by the enormous increase, consequent on the war, of the cost of living. This robbery must be resisted if the country is to be saved from bankruptcy.

The Irish Financial Relations Committee demands that, as a preliminary, Ireland be exempt from all this additional taxation, and that the over-taxation already imposed on this country be taken off.

**THE END**



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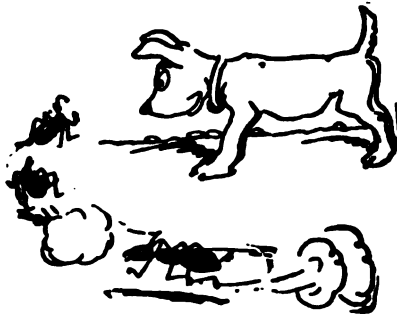
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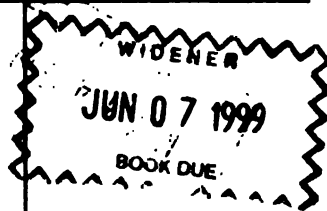
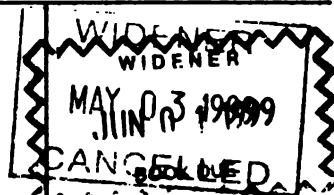




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